# THE COMMONWEAL

***A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts, and Public Affairs.***

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# DREAMS AND BUSINESS

EUROPE is not America, nor are Europe's—nor Britain's—problems America's. There are those who, upon occasions that can always be made to recur, lose no opportunity of suggesting a special community of interests between the two great branches of the English-speaking peoples. For more than one reason, this notion of a vast Anglo-Saxon condominium, toward which destiny, shrewdly assisted, is moving with the momentum of a natural force, finds less favor among Catholics than among some other elements in our population. They are aware how large a part in the colorful story was played by groups and individuals whose descendants have been taken into American life by other roads than those of race and blood. The spiritual enrichment that has come from diversity is obvious to them. They make no doubt that forces not dissimilar have been at work in the material and intellectual spheres as well, and that their resultant today is only obscured and misinterpreted by too rigid an insistence upon the legend of a common origin, buttressed though it be by the historical accident of a common language.

This having been granted, we are free to go on and admit that for American Catholics special interest must always attach to such a meeting as the National Catholic Congress, held last year at Manchester, and of which the printed report has just reached America. For, if only a proportion of our people inherit Anglo-Saxon blood, there is no doubt that the conditions under which we live are an Anglo-Saxon inheritance. It was the destiny of this country to come into being as a nation contemporaneously with the beginnings of the industrial movement, which not only changed the face of the earth but had a profound influence on habits of thought. The size and scale of the experiment in the older country have been kept before our eyes during every decade of our national existence. Its justification by reason of the wealth it produced has effectually prevented its being seriously questioned in a country whose early problems were necessarily material ones.

Two things have resulted from this reaction and interaction of two great nations dedicated to similar conceptions of life and life's purpose. One is that, by very reason of our size and unexpended resources, we were able to improve on our teachers, and become teacher in turn. The other is that, owing to the greater social elasticity of a newer and wider world, we have been saved hitherto from learning more than the pleasanter half of the lesson industrialism has to teach. No category of the economically disinherited exists among us. No single class, dedicated to hard and unremunerative work as its secular function, and with


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no relief in sight from generation to generation, has as yet detached itself and assumed the properties of a social deposit. In a word, though signs are not wanting that prosperity may be leading us through a period of transition with our eyes only partially open, we have not attained that stage which a recent writer in England has had to note, where "men are ever coming more and more to feel that economic developments are too much for them, that the world has got out of human control and acquired a momentum of its own, so that economic hardships and contradictions have to be accepted as inevitable."

But because we have not reached this point, there is no reason we should not profit from lessons offered us by communities which have. Meeting, as it did, in the midst of the greatest labor conflict that has ever visited England, it was natural that the general strike should cast its shadow over the Manchester Congress. Stolidity and a refusal to be perturbed are typical of our English brothers, and the nearest thing to a warning note was uttered somewhat casually by Mr. E. Colgan, of the Catholic Social Guild, an organization which makes its basis the Rerum Novarum encyclical, when he told the congress that at Blaydon, in the centre of the mining region, during a May Day procession where many incendiary banners and mottoes were carried and which ended in a meeting addressed by an avowed communist, "the most prominent of the people in the procession were Catholic miners and their wives." "Many of these Catholics," Mr. Colgan went on, "are regular in their attendance to their duties, some of them are even more, they are prominent members of the League of the Cross: yet they do not realize the danger to their religion by their wholehearted support on such occasions. . . . Conditions drive Catholic miners into these movements and their interest in reforms sometimes blinds them to real issues, and often, before they have quite realized it, . . . they find themselves drifting until they are faced with a struggle between religion and politics."

Critics anxious to carp might well have asked the speaker whether any issue more "real" than that of a subsistence wage was likely to commend itself to a locked-out miner, to say nothing of a locked-out miner's wife, and whether the ambiguous word "politics" at all in such a connection is not a misnomer subconsciously used to spare the susceptibilities of a prim Manchester audience. Catholics and Christians generally will be quite prepared to pierce the unfortunate phrasing. They will see in Mr. Colgan's speech the expression of a very sincere and timely apprehension. Is there a danger that the impact of economic problems, presented in their most poignant fashion, may in the end so indurate the believing worker's heart that the seed of life finds itself falling upon parched and rebellious soil? It is to be noted that misgivings on the score are not by any means confined to England. In a recent article upon Catholics and the housing problem, published in La Vie Catholique, M. Joseph Denais, a former municipal councilor of Paris, puts the cruel dilemma into words no one can fail to understand when he asks us "how ideas of revolution can fail to haunt the upright and hard-working head of a family when he is unable, in return for an honest rental, to ensure his family a sanitary dwelling, and how it is humanly possible for him not to adjudge as malignant and deserving of subversion a society that acknowledges itself powerless to satisfy this primal necessity." "We find ourselves, here," continues M. Denais, "squarely in face of that 'undeserved misery' against which the great 'worker's Pope' Leo XIII, raised his voice with such eloquence and fervor."

Luckily, both in the old world and in the new, men of good will are not lacking who make the translation of Christian ethics into practice their concern. To name the organizations, national, international and regional, which make industrial relations their subject of debate and who offer suggestions for more humane contacts between labor and capital would be a work of supererogation. But no list, however perfunctory, can omit the two Catholic Conferences in this country on Industrial and Social Relations, which meet periodically in the most actively industrial sections of our own country, nor the Semaine Sociale and Jeunesse Ouvrière in France, with their many ramifications, nor the various organizations connected with the Centrum party in Germany. Outside the Catholic communion justice compels mention of the Interchurch Movement, whose courageous report on the situation at Pittsburgh a few years ago created almost a crisis in the attitude of religion to labor, and the Anglo-Catholic Summer School of Sociology, which is meeting for the third yearly session at Keble College, Oxford, next month, and whose discussions this year will be directed to examining the entire theory of property in its relations to Christian ethics and patristic teaching.

Naturally, in the ranks of the men and women who attend these congresses and conferences, every shade of thought and temperament is represented, from impatient actionists who incur the easy reproach of "Sovietism" to so-called "dreamers" for whom the sneer of "mediaevalism" is always kept as a handy and telling retort. Nevertheless, it is impossible not to see, out of all this discussion, claim and counter-claim, something that wears the lineaments of a true Christian sociology beginning to define itself, whose power to redress the ills of the industrialized world may prove incalculable. Bishop McDevitt of Harrisburg, who has just presided with such rare dignity and sympathy over the regional meeting of the Catholic Conference on Industrial Problems in his own cathedral city, puts the case irrefutably in the May issue of the National Catholic Welfare Conference Bulletin, when he tells us that "no greater force can be found to reform the evils of our industrial system than a strong, rightly informed public opinion, which is always created by means of a thorough, honest, intelligent and persistent discussion of any important question."

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# THE COMMONWEAL

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## WEEK BY WEEK

THE British government seems to have proved its case in so far as Russian propaganda activity in China is concerned. Documentary evidence to show that the Soviet directors were willing to expend a great deal of time and money on organizing nationalism in the Orient exists in such easily surveyed abundance that doubt is hardly permissible. Of course Russian violation of a solemn treaty obligation is implied, and there was every reason why Britain should have proceeded to break off diplomatic relations. This must have been done reluctantly, however, owing to the loss of trade that must inevitably follow. It is, one confesses, a little difficult to see why the Soviets should have gone to such lengths in trying to "educate" China. Admiration for the culture and affection for the citizens of Confucius's land were hardly the determining motives. Was it devotion to a communistic ideal which stirred up all the activity? Perhaps to some extent. But really one cannot get rid of the impression that the Russians have hoped to do certain things which for some reason or other sound familiar. If China were to become a communistic nation directed to a large extent from Moscow; if it resolved to cut adrift from every European country and close its harbors to trade; if it decided to divest itself of its own merchant class and run its business affairs through a "central committee"—then the gentlemen whose favorite color is red would acquire a prodigious expanse of fertile territory out of which to extract a detail sometimes referred to as wealth but usually spoken of by them as "commodities." The parallel here indicated is impressive, but having received a considerable amount of training in such matters, the Oriental will probably see the point for himself.

INCUMBENT upon every editor or editorial board from time to time is the unpleasant duty of modifying statements which, in the light of later knowledge, are seen to be misstatements. How far this duty is generally discharged has nothing to do with the case in point, and must not deter The Commonweal from admitting that a recent reference to the conditions of religious instruction in Chilean schools presented a roseate view of the facts which does not appear to be justified. Under what amounts to the dictatorship of General Ibanez, the reigning President, an era of disestablishment in fact seems to be impending for the land of nitrates. From an article in the London Tablet, we learn that state support will shortly be withdrawn from churches and church institutions, chaplains from the army, and religious instructors from the schools. Anticlericalism, it is a common experience, seldom stops halfway. It is in its nature to grow by what it feeds upon and it is seldom satisfied with merely nugatory measures. What trials, therefore, may be in store for Chilean Catholics, who compose the immense majority of the population, can only be conjectured. Our own happy experience of a church supported by voluntary contributions and free of all control from government should not blind us to the fact that conditions in Latin countries are different. Meantime there is comfort in the fact, recorded by the Tablet, that a law of many years' standing permitting parents to remove their pupils during periods of religious instruction in state schools has hitherto been taken advantage of by no more than from 2½ to 5 percent. If these figures give any index to the convictions of Chileans generally, the kindly intentions of General Ibanez in regard to religion need not cause undue alarm.

WE HAVE expressed the conviction that Sacco and Vanzetti were not convicted of crime with that impartiality toward evidence which satisfies public opinion that justice has been legally done. It is quite as wrong to sentence a man unfairly as to take him out of jail by force and hang him to the nearest tree. In fact, the second method might sometimes be considered admirable if it were compared with the action of a prejudiced court. None of us knows definitely that Judge Thayer was actually biased. But we did all want to see Governor Alvan Fuller look into the matter and tell us frankly what he thinks of it. This has been no easy task, owing, on the one hand, to the cowardly intimidating dramatics of certain radical sympathizers, and, on the other hand, to the difficulties which a man not personally associated with the judiciary naturally finds in reviewing legal evidence. Now the Governor, with that fine sense of practical values which we have consistently admired in him, has gone further than duty demanded. By appointing a separate

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advisory committee to examine into the case independently, he has assured the public that there is no desire on the part of Massachusetts authority to smother any information bearing on the problem. The committee itself, formed as it is of three eminent Massachusetts citizens notable in a very special way for their confidence in and readiness to work with public opinion, is about as good a guarantee as one could hope to get that unfairness will be absolutely eliminated from the final decision regarding the fate of Sacco and Vanzetti.

CHICAGO is square up against another struggle for an upright non-political judiciary. As we write, the returns from the election of June 6 are being counted and there is no way of telling whether the courts have become intimately "affiliated" with the Thompson-Crowe government. For years the Chicago judiciary has enjoyed unusual opportunities to uphold civic virtue. The circuit judges, qualified in some measure to supervise municipal finances, have time and time again prevented the current of gathered dollars from irrigating the front yards of deserving political henchmen, the most epochal occasion being the aftermath of Mayor Thompson's illustrious "pageant of progress." Occurring during 1917, this great display of produce and peanut-stands on the Chicago municipal pier had been preceded by an unprecedented blowing of the Thompsonian "horn" and innumerable promises of profits to the deserving. But when all the splendor had died away, a circuit judge came riding like the Red Cross knight and saved the profits, almost to the last dollar, for the city treasury. How could one overlook such a deed of calamitous virtue? How could the illustrious Thompson, once more master of the municipal citadel, help making haste to see that such a thing did not happen again? Indeed his memory recalled even other ominous details. These same judges have, for instance, the right to appoint park commissioners—who in turn are sultans dispensing (or in a position to dispense) numerous jobs requiring nothing more strenuous than an occasional leisurely drive past the bears of Lincoln Park. The conclusion has, therefore, long since been obvious. The judges should be men who know what the greatest living enemy of King George wants, and who are ready to act upon what they know.

ACCORDINGLY a master-mind has devised a remarkable plan for translating this conclusion into practice. A political coalition comprising the Mayor, his bosom friend Mr. Robert Crowe, and the amenable though Democratic Mr. George Brennan, has agreed that the list of candidates recognized by both major political parties shall not include the jurists who have been proved offensive by history. The voter going to the polls sees a shining array of twenty names, recommended to Democrats and Republicans alike, and belonging for the most part to men who have already sat on the bench worthily. Three names are new, however, and it is precisely these three upon which municipal corruption stakes its hopes. They are substitutes for the names of the "great offenders" whose vigilance has no place in the Thompsonian democracy. These "offenders," the best jurists now serving Chicago, are forced to ask for election independently. This means that they must expect voters, only a few of whom are really trained and many of whom are cannily bossed, to scratch the ballots and so wreck the plot. Is this expectation justified? The results will tell. The Chicago Bar Association and numerous other agencies have tried hard to educate citizens regarding the issue, but several decades of free schooling have not, it must be confessed, justified anybody in assuming that education has any real punch. Quite obviously if this education were the mighty "weapon of democracy" about which we hear so much, Mayor Thompson would never have been obliged to assume the burdens of office.

NOW that the Episcopal Church has practically decided to begin the exorcism of the Eighteenth Amendment, one may legitimately hope that the desirable ultimate "casting out" is a little nearer than it was. However opinions regarding that church may vary, there is no danger that anybody will accuse it of constituting a "foreign element"—by which is usually meant somebody like a wine-loving, hard-working and eminently desirable Italian—or of being unfamiliar with the purpose of native institutions. Episcopalianism has been here in force for some time, and a good many of our most prominent grandfathers have been brought up in it. These facts have not been denied by Mr. Wayne B. Wheeler. He has contented himself with sounding an alarum and emitting a slogan—"Money, and a lot of it." The present Anti-Saloon League purpose seems to be to make an impression on the Middle-West, where prominent organs of publicity, official reports of spreading contempt for law and the simply unquenchable thirst of a multitude have combined to threaten aridity. Admittedly money can accomplish a great deal in the field of political action. It has been known to elect senators and representatives; it has once or twice associated the government of the people with gross scandal. But Mr. Wheeler ought to think twice before he assumes that it will buy law or morality. It is, judging from evidence, much more likely to purchase contraband hooch. The present race for funds, as staged by bootlegging gentlemen and the Anti-Saloon League on parallel tracks, has brought the prohibition problem to a stage quite as ironically comic as the celebrated race in which Mr. Tupman once engaged without breaking any speed record.

THE necessity of referring to South America this week may excuse reference to a matter which pressure upon our Week by Week columns compelled us to neglect at due date. From a somewhat dusty file we rescue a two-page sheet entitled the South American, dedicated to "Educational Advance in South America," a column of which is taken up with the activities of a

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certain Dr. Erasmo Braga, "Secretary of the Brazilian Committee on Coöperation and Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Brazil." Under a half-tone of a benevolent and spectacled face, considerable information upon Dr. Braga is supplied. We learn that he is "endowed with those social gifts which North Americans so often have reason to envy in their Latin-American fellows"; that he is endowed with the Pentacostal gift of tongues, and that his presence in this country on a whole-time job is for the purpose of "forwarding the program of Christian education in South America." The conduct of missionary enterprise in far lands is the business of any church that cares to undertake it, and how far it is best carried out at long range and under "educational" auspices is equally their concern. But the assumption implied in calling Protestant colportage in Catholic Brazil "Christian education" is so flagrant that The Commonweal feels almost a relief in departing from its customary suavity and letting the South American, its editors, subscribers and supporters, know that it considers their issue "volume one, number one," a little monument of impertinence, arrogance and bad taste.

HOMICIDE statistics as gathered by the Prudential Life Insurance Company indicate that the number of murders committed in the United States during 1926 was smaller than the 1925 figure. This will gratify people who yearn for greater security and it will also please those who have been active in promoting various plans for crime prevention. Manifestly a country in which 12,000 people are slain annually has some right to exact heavier punishment through courts of law in order that the "force of fear" may be felt. Nevertheless there is always danger that alarmed recourse to measures like capital punishment will defeat its own purpose, by too great a readiness to exact the death penalty, by making violent criminals tend to become monstrous desperadoes, and by organizing that humanitarian resentment of capital punishment which is a constant in modern civilizations. By comparison the habitual criminal act, which has just become a law in the State of California, seems to us an unusually sane preventive measure. It provides that a person convicted of a felony after having been found guilty of two "major felonies"—defined by the statute and running the gamut from burglary to perjury—shall be declared an habitual criminal and sentenced to life imprisonment. If this law is conscientiously enforced, it will free the community of men who generally tend to become murderers and who are often really "psychopathic cases." The idea of parole notwithstanding, it is useless to experiment with men who have proved themselves incapable of using freedom sanely. Besides, life imprisonment of habitual offenders ought, to some extent, free the state of the inglorious and truly hideous duty necessarily associated with the "death house," whose proliferation in the columns of the meaner press is an offense to dignity and humanity alike.

IN VIEW of the pronouncement of the Holy See against immoral literature, contained in the Acta Apostolicae Sedis published a month ago, special interest attaches to an article by M. Louis Renaudin in a recent issue of La Vie Catholique, which sums up the results of a debate upon what the reading public is getting used to hear described for it as "the crisis in the novel." M. Renaudin's remarks are addressed primarily to a French audience and consider the crisis rather from its artistic than its moral side. Nevertheless, they are well worth hearkening to in a country where exactly the same steady infiltrations are finding their way into the printed word, with no less lamentable results to art. It is also worthy of remark that those who contributed to the debate were not satisfied to deplore, but go on to suggest remedies, and that most of them regard the crisis as one of misdirected growth rather than decay. François Mauriac, perhaps the foremost among the younger French novelists since the war, believes that the novel languishes because essential matter for drama is failing the present generation of writers. Great fiction, he says, "lived on the conflict between passion and the resistance which religion, morality, social prejudices or even worldly honor, if you will, offer to it in our souls. . . . Modern youth has ceased to believe in such things. . . . The idea of what was once called 'love' is something as remote from their conception of life as the Court of Versailles." M. Henri Massis, one of the best of French critics, assents, but believes that the conflict can be rediscovered if only things of earth are looked at under the aspect of eternity. "The essential conflict that Christianity never fails to awaken in us," he tells the despondent young novelist, "is the mainspring of drama in our moral and social life. It is in this sense that Chesterton spoke so great a truth when he declared that the Catholic vision was 'the most romantic thing in the world.'"

PHYSICISTS have long been aware of the existence of what is known as "cold light," in other words, light which is shown by fireflies, glowworms, etc., which cause the phosphorescence in the water seen at times in the wake of a ship as well as the "fox-fire" of rotten wood. How these noctilucae produce their light has been a subject of intensive study, for it is quite certain that the very best incandescent lamps which man can devise come nowhere near them in efficiency. If their secret can be guessed then there will be an advance in illumination greater far than even the substitution of electricity for gas or of the latter illuminant for lamps and candles. The most recent researches have been made by Dr. Coblenz and Dr. Hughes of the United States Bureau of Standards, and by Professor Harvey of Princeton, and are briefly recorded by our contemporary Science. All these forms of light come from living things, for of course the "fox-fire" is not produced by the wood itself but by bacteria preying upon it. It was once imagined that the light produced by

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these living things was due to a kind of slow combustion of their own substance. That now turns out to be an incorrect idea, for it seems that during the processes of digestion some special material is formed which, when acted upon by an enzyme, also produced in the body, is caused to shine.

THE news that historic Galway is at last to be a port of call for trans-Atlantic liners stirs the historical imagination. There is no more interesting city in the world than this isolated seaport "furthest-west," nor one where the relics of ruined prosperity preach a more striking sermon on the quality of the national life that was struck down by the alien invader three and a half centuries ago. Some years ago a school of historians existed, in England and elsewhere, who busied themselves propagating a legend according to which the Celtic and Catholic Irish were constitutionally incapable of evolving any kind of material civilization or comfort. To those who still credit the myth, the old glories of Galway are not a bad retort. We know that it contained within its walls fine churches and foundations, of which last the College of Saint Nicholas, with 1,200 scholars, was the chief; that its flourishing commerce overseas was reflected in the fine mansions built by its burgesses; and that even in penal days it served as a refuge for the hard-pressed Catholics and was the point through which they maintained contact with their brethren overseas. Those who would learn of its ancient splendor and the ruin that descended upon it as late as 1652, may be referred to the text, views and plans in Hardyman's History of the City of Galway, probably one of the rarest and most unique of local histories, and one which it is rather surprising has never been reprinted in a modern edition. It is a pleasant thought that the haven which has seen so much of Ireland's best leave her forever, may now become the point at which men and women of Irish blood get their first glimpse of the land of their fathers.

## EDUCATING EDUCATION

PROFESSOR Alexander Meiklejohn has outlined, and the University of Wisconsin has agreed to accept, an experimental program in higher education. A small "community" of first- and second-year students is to be segregated, with their teachers, from the academic activities of the university as a whole. Within the confines of this domain experimentation will try to work out a more satisfactory system of training. A beginning is to be made, Dr. Meiklejohn informs us, with a variety of socialized teaching. That is, there will be no classes, no subjects, no specialists in anything. Everybody will be busy dealing with one topic—Athenian civilization, for instance. The students who congregate for this purpose from the separate hamlets of the Middle-West will, at least, have the comfort of knowing that they are serving a pioneer purpose, however gawky they may appear in the rôle. We may rightly share their curiosity, because Dr. Meiklejohn's proposal is interesting and significant from at least two points of view.

In the first place, is not this plan calculated to stir up a little revolution in teaching? During recent years instructors, all bent to one frame of mind by dissertorial labors, have frankly perched themselves upon one rail from which both timidity and a longing for "authoritativeness" have prevented any descent or even random exploration. Indeed things have come to such a pass that embryologists and similar savants scorn the outsider who would humbly take an interest in their subjects, while proudly confessing their own absolute ignorance of everything not embryological. There is some excuse for this point of view in the case of scientific research. But it should be rather obvious that history, philosophy, literature and the social sciences are so closely affiliated that one cannot competently discuss one without knowing something of the others. In fact, we make bold to define a good teacher of one of these studies as a man who could, if called upon to do so, master any of the others with only a reasonable amount of additional preparation. Naturally good teaching of this kind is not the same as good scholarship. And yet even investigation is often seriously hampered by the specialist's limitations. Paul Claudel, in declaring that he earnestly wished some religious order might undertake the study of Oriental philosophical literature, maintained that the existing misunderstanding of that literature was due to the ignorance of Oriental social institutions on the part of European commentators. How futile it is to approach authors like Dickens or Balzac without some knowledge of social history and theory ought to be apparent.

Secondly, the plan presupposes a reform of secondary education. If the study of such a thing as Athenian civilization is not to be the merest trifling, the student must bring to his work some knowledge of Greek and Latin, some ability to wrestle with abstract ideas and to appreciate what in the concrete is known as form, some definite number of definite details which he can contribute to his own educational synthesis. These things the average student simply does not bring. To a large extent the product of secondary education has been the victim of mass training, which jumbles a crowd of youngsters through inadequate part-time sessions, and of the prevailing idealism regarding the aim of the high school to prepare for "civic living." He is painfully made to learn by rote those matters which an honestly educated person would learn as a matter of course. There is no doubt that if Dr. Meiklejohn's experiment should ever be widely incorporated in the university system, a change in preliminary education would almost automatically be imposed.

It is interesting, too, to observe how the projected arrangement of "individual instruction," relying upon precepts to be followed later on by the student himself, virtually follows the practice of the "father confessor" in spiritual life and progress. Here is a point

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where the idea may possibly be of some service to Catholic education. We heard an experienced university professor of apologetics say recently, quite without any stimulus from Dr. Meiklejohn, that the study of religion in higher schools ought not to be made dependent upon the classroom. No student, he declared, would bare his real spiritual convictions, questions or doubts in the presence of his fellows. Indeed, their presence seems to congeal him into an attitude of indifference and often even of flippancy. How much better it would be, he thought, if the instruction could be individual, the student then being required to follow an indicated course of reading. To this proposal, not having any practical acquaintance with the problem, we can only say "Perhaps."

Nevertheless, to come back to Wisconsin University, it does not seem very likely that lectures will ever lose their value in education. No matter how valuable reading and private research may be, there is gained from a good harangue to an interested group a certain stimulus, a rather vague but none the less real stirring-up of energy, which come from no other source. Everybody who has ever sat under a good lecturer knows this. Unfortunately people who were never intended by their Maker as "givers of addresses" are frequently impressed into the posse; but this does not argue against the man who can. Here again the religious analogy seems pertinent. Despite all the value derived from private counsel and personal "taking of stature," the sermon remains, when it is effective, an instrument that cannot be replaced. Wise men may experiment with it and the cognate educational lecture, but their eagerness to search ought not to cause them to throw away what has already been found.

## THE CHINESE VEIL

CHINA in turmoil undoubtedly presents a challenge to Christian missionary effort. This does not mean that the value of the work is in question, or that there is any danger of its ceasing so long as pioneers of the Faith are at all able to carry it on. The point is rather that a better way must be found to tap those sources of spiritual energy and moral conduct which characterize the peoples of the Orient. Undoubtedly science, in the sense of ethnology and kindred branches, can here be of the greatest assistance to Christian progress. At present, therefore, the Church is relying upon the aid of scholarship to an extent perhaps unparalleled in her history. Here she is guided by conclusions so like those stated not long ago from the point of view of Orientalists by Sylvain Lévi, the eminent Paris authority, that we cannot refrain from quoting him here.

"Oriental peoples," he declared in a famous interview with Frédéric Lefèvre, "are the heirs of a long past, rich in culture, of which they have not entirely lost consciousness and in the spirit of which they might perhaps continue to live and work. We Europeans have assumed the responsibility of interfering in their development — sometimes without consulting them, sometimes at their request. We claim, rightly or wrongly, to represent a superior civilization, and on the basis of that superiority, which we have announced with such assurance that native Orientals dared not presume to doubt it, we have undermined all their traditions. We have believed, quite honestly too, that we could give them a higher standard of living, but we have not stopped to consider whether this implied greater happiness.

"And generally speaking, wherever the European has intervened in the Orient, the native has seen, with a kind of despair truly poignant, the decline rather than the increase of his store of well-being, in the moral order even more than in the material order. The foundations of life upon which his people built crumble, and the pillars of gold upon which he hoped to erect a new order look like gilded stage sets. This deception is being transformed into hatred throughout the Orient, and hatred is interested only in a propitious moment to strike. The Russian revolution has introduced into this confusion a redoubtable factor. It is constantly interested in marshaling the native Oriental under the red banner which is also the flag of war against European civilization—a civilization that has organized and supported those aspects of capitalistic enterprise from which all colonies suffer more or less.

"If Europe, either through ignorance or sloth, does not make the effort which its own interests themselves dictate, then the drama of Asia will move toward a crisis. It is here that science, which is a form of life and the instrument of political action, must be relied upon to unveil native civilizations and native life so that their hidden springs will be clearly visible—so that, to be more explicit, Europe can coöperate in a great development rather than continue to choke progress for selfish reasons. We must learn to offer our civilization as we do our other goods, on the basis of local rates of exchange. Our old systems of colonization are, as everybody admits, dead and buried. Even the new formula of mandates, which is quite without intrinsic merit, indicates the wide-spread conviction that we must break with the imperialistic past. Let us collaborate, knowing with whom we are dealing and what goals we have in view."

These are strong words but they carry conviction. Why should an Oriental in the least conscious of an old and distinguished tradition, concede the "superiority" of scores of little drummer jackanapes who nauseate decent Europeans? On the other hand, he will see clearly—when his eyes are freed of blinding resentment—that the missionary of the Church comes as a "servant of servants," anxious that the tree of Christ should be planted deep on the spiritual soil amassed by centuries, willing to understand in all charity, and desirous of taking away with him nothing except the fruits of mystical victory.

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# THE MISBEHAVIORISTS

By HARVEY WICKHAM

HENRY NELSON WIEMAN is a teacher of philosophy at Occidental College, Los Angeles, and the author of Religious Experience and the Scientific Method. Those who have not access to his book will find an article of his in the files of The Century, entitled The Approaching Crisis, which sums up not only his doctrine but a somewhat widely current belief, as follows:

> This decline [of religion] has been largely due to its [religion's] inadequate adjustment to scientific method and discovery. At the present time it is research in the field of psychology and sociology which is demanding a transformation in our thinking.

It would, of course, be easy to meet these assertions with counter-assertions, particularly as to the alleged decline of religion, and to claim that the whole "crisis" is imaginary. But Professor Wieman, not through any particular personal eminence but by the possession of quite the contrary quality, represents a very common type of American thought and thus gains a certain importance. So let his crisis be granted and some attention paid to his remedy. For it must be admitted, I think, that religion has gone its way without paying much attention to the psychologists. I have even met otherwise well-informed Christians who did not know exactly what the word psychology signifies.

Curiously enough, this is precisely the difficulty among psychologists themselves. The mere word, of course, gives no trouble. It means a study of the soul. But as the science bearing that name began its career by ignoring the soul, and continues in some quarters by categorically denying its existence, the situation is a little difficult. Most books dealing with the matter devote at least half of their pages to explaining what psychology is not, and their remaining pages to the attempt to set forth the author's ideas as to the true scope and subject-matter of the science.

David Wechsler, associate professor of the Psychological Corporation of New York, says, for instance, that the theory which regards thinking as sub-vocal speech is not so far-fetched as it seems. To him, psychology is the study of certain muscular movements of the throat and chest not accompanied by sounds, and the ideal reasoner an ignorant man attempting to read to himself. Now what religion, I would ask, has ever squared itself with this conception? Dr. J. B. Watson, of Johns Hopkins, agrees that if we could stop these throat movements we could—oh, consummation devoutly to be wished!—stop thinking altogether.

Dr. William McDougall, of Harvard, a vitalist and friendly to Freud and Jung, practically limits psychology to instinct. Dr. Jacques Loeb, formerly of the University of California, also puts instinct in charge, but being a mechanist, he understands by instinct a purely mechanical process. The only religious people I know of who have been sufficiently mechanical to meet his demand are certain eastern nations who instinctively delegate their devotions to prayer-wheels operated by the wind. Summing up the behaviorist belief (not, perhaps, without the saving grace of irony) Bertrand Russell assures us that at last "it has been ascertained that there is no such thing as mind." Here again religion has been woefully negligent and suffered itself to lag behind the times. Let it take what comfort it can from the declarations of certain other specialists, who maintain that there is no light on earth or in heaven but the cold light of introspection. It would be easier, however, for the devout to hitch his chariot to this new star, if the professional star-gazers would but agree among themselves which star it is.

It would not be fair, however, to dismiss our Professor Wieman here, ruling him out on a mere technicality. He would be among the first to admit that there are psychologists and psychologists, some of them probably no better than philosophers or metaphysicians. What he doubtless has in mind (or should I say sub-vocal speech?) is that psychology which seems to be emerging from among its competitors as psychology, per se, for the reason that it offers little or no resemblance to anything else—behaviorism, to wit. And be Professor Wieman's opinion what it may, it is unquestionably to this, the real Simon Pure, that religion must adjust itself if it is to escape the censure of its critics. To make terms with vitalists like Jung, Freud and McDougall, while remaining at odds with men like A. Bethe, author of Dürfen wir den Ameisen u. Bienen Psychische Qualitäten, who holds that honey-bees move in response to a force (einer Kraft) diffused through space, which makes them blindly fly forth to the flowery fields when empty and to return to their hives when laden—to do this would be like entering into a treaty with a handful of refugees while still under the guns of an untaken citadel.

This modern and formidable psychology dates from the experiments of one Wilhelm Wundt, in the University of Leipzig about fifty years ago. It was Wundt who discovered what is known as "reaction time," or that innocent-seeming period which elapses between the happening of an event and our response to it. He thus laid the basis for those intelligence tests first brought to public notice by the Frenchman, Alfred Binet, and I am far from wishing to minimize the importance of his work. Wundt brought psychology squarely within the scope of the experimental method, and helped rid it of a lunatic fringe of dreamers.

True, human conduct had long since been made the subject of definite and recorded observations, but the

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observers—some of them—had called themselves scholastics, not psychologists, and so far as Wundt and his immediate entourage were concerned, their labors had been largely lost sight of. It was refreshing to see the science emerge from the clouds of individual, untrained, subjective whims which had been befogging it. Here was something better than the dogma, "If you think you think a thing, it must be so." Behavior at least was tangible and capable of proof. The study of it promised much. But unfortunately the new school, too, had its lunatic fringe, and soon the entire fabric began to ravel until today the fringe threatens to become the whole garment.

"Our wishes and hopes, disappointments and sufferings," says Professor Loeb in The Mechanist Conception of Life, "have their source in the instincts which are comparable to the light instincts of the heliotropic animals."

A tropism, it should perhaps be explained for the benefit of the elder generation, is a tendency to move toward or away from any external object, the operation being carried out by means of chemical or mechanical changes within the subject. Thus the heliotrope, which always strives to turn toward the sun, got its name. It is said to be positively tropic to light. Professor Loeb, however, seems to be negatively tropic in this regard, and to prefer darkness, for he adds:

> The need of the struggle for food, the sexual instinct with its poetry and its chain of consequences, the maternal instincts with the felicity and the suffering caused by them —are the roots from which our inner life develops. For some of these instincts, the chemical basis is at least sufficiently indicated to arouse the hope that their analysis from the mechanistic point of view is only a question of time.

Hope, he says. The second of the virtues, once set between faith and charity, is here invoked to express the author's reaction to the prospect that some day all the movements of the inner life may be reduced to the level of so many warping planks exposed to variations in humidity and to changing temperatures.

But some will say that Professor Loeb is a back number, that the mechanist conception of life is on the wane, that it is unfair to attribute to modern thought any ideas which were current several years ago. Unfortunately the mechanist conception in psychology is by no means on the wane. Dr. Watson is no back number, and the results of his philosophy he sums up thus:

> One of the most important elements in the judging of personality, character and ability is the history of the individual's yearly achievements. We can measure this objectively by the length of time the individual stayed in his various positions—and the yearly increases he received in his earnings. If the individual is a writer, we should want to draw a curve of the prices he gets for his stories year by year. If from our leading magazines he receives the same average price per word for his stories at thirty that he received at twenty-four, the chances are he is a hack writer and will never do anything but that.

This is not intended to be funny. The behaviorists, so far as I am aware, have not yet discovered humor. This confusion of personality, character and ability is seriously intended. Evidently we must revise our estimation of the saints and hereafter canonize only those whose names appear among the upper brackets in income-tax returns. Bertrand Russell himself is appalled, after attempting to apply this criterion to "Buddha, Christ, Mohammed, Milton and Blake." He says:

> Since the only thing we can do is to move our bodies, the popular votaries of the [behavioristic] creed are likely to infer that we ought to move them as much as possible. The man who runs up a descending escalator should be the beau-ideal.

But Russell is something of a traitor in this company. He can laugh. It required our Professor Wieman, of Los Angeles, near Hollywood, to add the keystone to the arch by describing even God as a "behavior of the universe."

To get the full flavor of these arguments we must follow them to their less eminent channels of expression. The pupils are not more naïf than the masters, but they are frequently more plain spoken, less inclined to hide the nakedness of their thought behind a vagueness or obscurity which may be mistaken for the cloak of reason. J. B. Eggen, for example, is constrained to assure us in Current History for September, 1926:

> There is no such thing as the mind in the old sense of the word, and it cannot be considered as a separate thing from the body. The mind is not a thing with which we react, it is a form of reaction. We do not think with our brain; there is nothing inside the brain but a lot of neurones. We think with our muscles.

The yokel, formerly alleged to have thought with his feet, thus comes to his own.

These neurones, however, deserve more than passing mention, and fully to understand their behavior we must remember that there are three sets of them, one connected with the sensory organs, another with the motor system, while in between lurks a third set, those of association, serving as mediator between the other two. And it is to this association neurone which religion must adjust itself if it expects to be invited out to dine with experimental psychology.

It is a simple structure, consisting of a nucleus from one end of which projects the dendrite, or brush, formed of several filaments not unlike the sensitive filaments of a sea-anemone. This is also called the receiving end. The other end is a mere knob, and is called the axon. When the dendrite of one cell comes in contact with the axon of another, a connection is made, known as a synapse.

Let us suppose now that an impression has been made upon one of the five senses, say a soldier hears the command to charge. Through the auditory nerve the message has reached one of the first group of neurons. If it gets to the right motor neuron, the soldier's

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legs will carry him forward in obedience to the command. But will it? Or will it get to a wrong one, say one which will cause his legs to turn and run? It all depends upon the intervening association neuron. Between the sensory neuron, or neurons, charged with the order to advance, and the motor neurons, ready to convert the order into action, the association neuron waves its anemone-like tentacles. Should a tentacle chance to make synapse with a heroism-laden sensory cell which says "Charge!" the machine-gun nest ahead will probably be taken. But if the contact is with an axon into which has been instilled the idea that he who fights and runs away may live to fight another day, there is soon going to be a soldier a.w.o.l.

I must here pause to apologize to the behaviorists for using the words "heroism," "idea," and the like. There is, of course, no heroism, or cowardice, or idea of any sort involved. We are not, as Dr. Watson would quickly inform us, interested in consciousness, only in conduct or behavior. This brain which does not think, this mind which is only a form of reaction, is necessarily the theatre of blindly acting forces. So what is it which determines what synapse, what connection shall be made? Why, chance!

Here at last is a point upon which all thoroughgoing behaviorists are agreed. The contact is made by chance and nothing else. For if you endow the association neuron with the power of choice, with will, you have entered the forbidden domain of consciousness and upset the entire mechanistic theory.

The synapse once made, chance steps back and leaves habit in command. The order to charge having been translated into forward-moving legs in the first instance, the soldier is now a perpetual candidate for citations and distinguished service medals. Or if he happened to run at the initial trial, he is a confirmed coward meriting only a firing-squad. For the nerve force has worn for itself a channel, so to speak, which has become the path of least resistance, and only another chance—one which grows more and more unlikely with every impulse which wears the first path smooth—can alter the procedure.

"The synapse," says Professor Pillsbury, "is the point where action leaves its impress upon the nervous system."

"Here also lies the basis of character and destiny," chimes in Miss Clara Stevens, growing lyrical upon the subject in The Open Court. "No need of a recording angel to set down our shortcomings against us. The mystic synapse is recorder—and avenger as well. Its use renders it all-powerful, its neglect bars further way for either temptation on the one hand or profitable deeds on the other. We can only act and think in the future as we have habituated the synapse in the past."

The lady, of course, has here allowed her enthusiasm to carry her too far. We can have nothing to do with the habituating of a neuron whose first motion was dictated by chance. And if we were born with certain channels of association already opened, it must have been because of chance acting upon some ancestor. If psychology of this sort is to transform our thinking, religion must simply cease to exist.

Yet it seems to me that the behaviorist rather than behaviorism is at fault. Professor Thorndike's famous experiments on cats doubtless laid bare a number of facts, and much may be learned by observing the conduct even of bipeds. Absurdity creeps in only when the observer alleges that there is nothing outside of his own field of interest. If a machinist wished to describe the movements of a locomotive in terms of alternately negative and positive tropisms between the piston and the cylinder-head, nobody need blame him—unless he went further and said that there was no such thing as steam. If psychologists would say that associations were formed, not by chance, but in obedience to a force or law to them unknown, there would be few to carp.

But even behaviorists see that without at least a theory reaching back of matter, the motions of matter are hardly thinkable and totally unimportant. They say they are not interested in the problems of consciousness, but their every page shows them to be interested in almost nothing else. The behaviorist carefully removes part of the brain of a dog, scratches the animal's leg, notes with cries of joy that a motion something like that of walking ensues, and concludes that every dog walks because of the irritating effects of the ground upon the soles of its feet. But I do not believe that he credits his own explanation. He is merely making for himself an opportunity to deny the existence of God.

The same desire evidently actuates Professor Wieman when, having used the words "religious vision" to describe an appreciation of that behavior of the universe which yields enjoyment, and having instanced the gregarious habits of young mothers meeting to exchange confidences which would not be understood by bachelors, he goes out of his way to add:

> Whenever two or three are gathered together to converse about this matter [the joy-giving behavior of the universe] we have a genuine church. Such was the church, and the only sort of church, that Jesus established.

Clearly we are dealing here, not with science at all, but with a positive, anti-religious passion. It runs through all the writings of those who strive so enthusiastically to drag themselves down below the atom—far, far below the atom as physicists understand it. So, before religion attempts to adjust itself to these psychologists of the modern school, it might be well for the psychologists themselves to bring their theories into line with the real discoveries of the day.

"This knowledge [of the materialists]," says A. S. Eddington, professor of astronomy at Cambridge, "is only an empty shell. It is knowledge of structural form, not knowledge of content. All through the physical world runs this unknown content which must surely be the stuff of our consciousness."

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# UNPROTECTED NATURAL RIGHTS

By JOHN A. RYAN

THE first decision ever issued by the Supreme Court of the United States on the constitutionality of legal sterilization of human beings was handed down May 2, 1927 (Buck vs. Bell) with only Justice Butler dissenting. Both the terms of the law and the history of the person attacking it were favorable to an affirmative decision. The Virginia statute is much narrower in scope than many similar enactments. It applies only to persons afflicted with hereditary recurrent insanity, imbecility, feebleminded-ness or epilepsy who, if sterilized, could be paroled or discharged and thus become self-supporting. The procedure specified in the law is ample for the protection of all the inmates' rights except that involved in the operation itself. It requires a hearing before the board of directors of the hospital or colony, with the inmate or his guardian in attendance; that the evidence be reduced to writing; that an appeal be allowed to the circuit court of the county, which may admit new evidence; finally, there may be an appeal to the Supreme Court of the state. Carrie Buck is the feebleminded daughter of a feebleminded mother and is herself the mother of an illegitimate feebleminded child.

On behalf of Carrie Buck, R. G. Shelton, who had been appointed her guardian, appealed to the Supreme Court of the United States from the decision of the Supreme Court of Appeals of the State of Virginia. Justice Holmes, who wrote the decision affirming the judgment of the Virginia Court, points out that Carrie Buck had obtained the full benefit of "due process of law," so far as procedure was concerned. Undoubtedly, this judgment is correct. Through her guardian, the plaintiff attacked the statute on the ground that it deprived her of the "equal protection of the laws," inasmuch as it applies only to those insane, feebleminded, etc., who are confined in state institutions. To this plea Justice Holmes replied: "The law does all that is needed when it does all that it can, indicates a policy, applies to all within the lines and seeks to bring within the lines all similarly situated so far and so fast as its means allow."

Counsel for Carrie Buck before the Supreme Court challenged the law on the further ground that it violates that clause of the Fourteenth Amendment which forbids a state to deprive any person of life or liberty without due process of law. "It violates her bodily integrity," he declared, "and is a deprivation of her life and liberty. . . . The inherent right of the individual to go through life without mutilation of the organs of generation needs no constitutional declaration. That right existed long before the Constitution was framed and was not lost or surrendered to legislative control when the government was created, and is beyond the reach of . . . the police power."

In its decision the Court does not even refer to the claim that the right to life which is protected by the Constitution includes the right to "bodily integrity," nor to the claim that the latter right, existing anterior to the Constitution, is beyond the reach of the state's police power. Apparently there is no constitutional ground upon which either of these claims could be plausibly upheld. At any rate, counsel failed to cite any supporting decisions of the Supreme Court. To destroy the power of generation is not a deprivation of life, but sterilization does involve some deprivation of liberty. Is it deprivation "without due process of law"? Counsel seemed unable to cite any decision answering this question in the affirmative, and the Court refused to give the "due process" clause that construction in the present case.

How far may the police power go in restraining individual liberty without violating "due process of law"? Perhaps the most comprehensive answer is that expressed in the famous canon enunciated by John Marshall: "Let the end be legitimate, let it be within the scope of the Constitution, and all means which are appropriate, which are plainly adapted to the end, which are not prohibited, but consist with the letter and spirit of the Constitution, are constitutional."

The end of the Virginia sterilization statute evidently is in conformity with this canon and with the definition of the police power, for it is the prevention of injury to the community from the procreation and existence of mental incompetents. Is the means, namely, sterilization, "appropriate and plainly adapted to that end"? Evidently, it is. Does the means "consist with the letter and spirit of the Constitution"? Here is the question which touches precisely the individual liberty or individual rights which are guaranteed by the "due process" clause. The answer of the Court is in the affirmative. The state is not forbidden by the Constitution to restrict the liberty of its citizens in the way which the sterilization statute prescribes. The Court points out that "the public welfare may call upon the best citizens for their lives," and refers to the principle enunciated in the case of Jacobson vs. Massachusetts, 197 U. S. 11.

One might, however, raise the objection that sterilization is not the only means available to the state for securing the end which is sought, namely, restricting the number of imbeciles, feebleminded, etc. Segregation of such persons in institutions and colonies would be equally effective. Inasmuch as Carrie Buck was already in such an institution, the end of the law was attained in her case and in that of others similarly confined. Moreover, it might be argued that segregation is a lesser, or at any rate, a less fundamental, interference with liberty than sterilization. The first of

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these objections was specifically answered by the Court in Jacobson vs. Massachusetts when it declared that: "It is no part of the function of a court or jury to determine which of two modes was likely to be the most effective for the protection of the public." Among appropriate means to a legitimate end, therefore, the state may choose the one that seems preferable. In the case that we are considering, it chose sterilization because sterilization is less expensive. If it be still contended that the interference with the liberty and physical integrity of the person is so much greater in sterilization than in segregation that the state was bound in harmony with the spirit of the Constitution to choose the latter, the obvious answer is that this contention is incapable of demonstration. Even if the Court had considered it, the Court would have been obliged to reject it according to the well-known rule that, in case of doubt, the presumption is in favor of the statute, not in favor of the Constitution.

Still another objection may be raised to the appropriateness of the means provided in the Virginia statute. The Court emphasized the good effects of the law in preventing "those who are manifestly unfit from continuing their kind," but it made no reference to the very serious evil effects. When Carrie Buck is discharged from the State Colony for Epileptics and Feebleminded, she will be incapable of bearing any more feebleminded children or any other kind of children, indeed, but she will also unquestionably be an easier prey for dissolute men. Moreover, she will become a more active carrier of loathsome disease. Whether these evil consequences of the sterilization statute combined with its deeper assault upon liberty would have been sufficient, if properly presented, to induce the Court to declare that the means provided in the law were not really adapted to securing the end and were not in conformity with the spirit of the Constitution, is a question which has considerable speculative interest. But it has no practical value. No such argument was made by the plaintiff. Therefore, no cognizance was taken of it by the Court.

It is unfortunate that Justice Butler did not write out and publish the reasons for his dissent. On its face the case seems to present no constitutional ground for invalidating the statute except possibly that described in the last paragraph. Even this ground was not formally brought within the Court's consideration.

To be sure, previous decisions could have construed the word "life" or the word "liberty" as including "the right to bodily integrity," mentioned by counsel for Carrie Buck. Had they done so the present case must have been decided differently. It is likewise conceivable that the facts and considerations set forth above might some day be presented to the Court so effectively as to bring about a different decision.

One comment on the decision deplored it as illustrating the tendency of federal courts to "set aside the deeper consideration of humanity and public policy in favor of conceptions that are purely legalistic." This is irrelevant. The Supreme Court is not permitted to determine the constitutionality of statutes on the basis of either humanity or public policy. Its only guide is the letter and the spirit of the Constitution. If these do not beyond reasonable doubt conflict with the statute which has been questioned, the statute must be sustained. No such contradiction appeared in the Virginia sterilization case. Therefore, the actual decision of the Court was inevitable.

Occasionally one finds Catholics who assume that the Constitution protects all natural rights against encroachment by Congress or by the states. This is a complete misconception. What the Constitution protects is certain forms of liberty, certain immunities from arbitrary interference, certain property rights. It does not pretend to safeguard all natural rights, much less to prohibit statutory infringements of the moral law. In general, Catholics are too prone to trust to the Supreme Court for protection of their rights and interests, instead of actively defending these in legislative bodies before the obnoxious proposals have been enacted into laws. If the decision in the Virginia sterilization case shall have the effect of dissipating this excessive trust in the Court and arousing Catholics to the necessity of actively opposing such dangerous measures as sterilization before they have taken the form of statutes, it will prove to that extent a blessing.

Are sterilization laws and proposals a dangerous phenomenon in the United States? Undoubtedly they are. Such legislation has been enacted in no less than twenty-three states. In six of these the laws have never been put into effect. In two others the laws have been applied only once. The total number of operations performed in virtue of this legislation in all the states is 6,244. Nor do these facts tell the whole story. There seems to be a well-organized group of men and women who actively seek the extension of such laws to other states. Moreover, many of the laws now in existence go much further than the one recently sustained by the Supreme Court.

In a brochure, published by the American Eugenics Society, entitled Eugenical Sterilization, Mr. Harry H. Laughlin has kindly provided us with the draft of a "model eugenical sterilization law." He would have the law applied to all "socially inadequate persons." Omitting most of the nine lines of jargon which Mr. Laughlin takes to define a "socially inadequate person," I note that this unfortunate being is one who "fails chronically in comparison with normal persons to maintain himself or herself as a useful member of the organized social life of the state." Apparently this definition would take in not only persons who are physically and mentally subnormal but those who are economically incompetent. Should it be enacted and enforced, it might take a place among the "standard" methods for the prevention of poverty! "Irresponsible" parents who persisted in having "more children than they could properly support" might be given the option of practicing birth control or being sterilized!

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# DEVELOPING DIPLOMACY

By WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS

IN MANY decades there has been no time more appropriate for a restatement of first principles of American foreign policy. After the initial forging and tempering of American diplomacy in the period of the Revolution, and its testing during our subsequent struggle not to be restricted to a comparatively small area of the Atlantic coast by England, our antagonist —and France, our not wholly disinterested ally, and Spain, our unwilling ally and principal competitor for the trans-Mississippi West—came an era of exultant expansion, of boundless and unlimited vistas, north, south and west.

Europe had attempted to confine us within boundaries, on our own continent. We felt explosive. No one should place boundaries to us. "Our population," said Seward, in 1848, "is destined to roll its resistless waves to the icy barriers of the North and to encounter Oriental civilization on the shores of the Pacific"; again, in an address at St. Paul, in 1860: "I can look southwest and see, amid all the convulsions that are breaking the Spanish-American republics, and in their rapid decay and dissolution, the preparatory stage for their reorganization in free, equal, self-governing members of the United States of America." He further predicted "that the city of Mexico, the ancient Aztec capital, would be "the ultimate central seat of power of the North American people." That was Lincoln's secretary of state speaking, and he was speaking to men who knew what expansion meant; men in the prime of life, middle-aged men who had broken prairie sod; who were restless once more; whose pioneer lives were becoming crowded by newcomers from the Atlantic seaboard.

Then came the great internal problems culminating in the Civil War; the readjustment of American life upon a new basis, a federal basis for the first time—almost an imperial basis, with constant growth of the central power and constant lessening of the centrifugal urge. During this period there appeared new focal points of internal interest. Rapid and more commodious transportation made possible an endless variety of sources of individual wealth, and both fell in opportunely to relieve the new restlessness of Europe after the continent-wide revolutionary crises from 1815 to 1848. Streams of new citizens flowed to the West. America was the second home, the birthright of every European, the remedy for and refuge from any hardship of European life. "Foreign" affairs became distinctly foreign, and distasteful to the majority of citizens; they were left to the experts, those whom we paid to keep us out of trouble with "foreigners," or to see to it that "foreigners" did not harm us in the back while our faces were turned to the West and opportunity. Foreign affairs had not yet become international affairs; during many decades we looked in, not out or beyond our boundaries. The war with Spain marked the end of that period—Spain, who had helped our independence but who had helped ungraciously—Spain, whose enmity was a tradition of our childhood days.

Roosevelt marked the beginning of another age; a blending of vigorous, joyous acceptance of Kipling's hymns of empire, the willing shouldering of "the white man's burden," with John Hay's resuscitation of the simple "open door" policy, a sober American doctrine from early years. Both have run concurrently, but the "open door," with us and for us; reciprocity, respect for neighbors, consideration for weaker nations, from the beginning have been held to be sound American doctrine. Expansion is built on youth, is part of youth. Roosevelt, with something of Kipling's imperialistic mysticism, something of Mussolini's fire and magnetism, called to youth and the youth of older America responded freely, thinking of the China coast, and clipper ships, of the Panama trail, of Walker; of Kipling's India and of empire building and of Cecil Rhodes. Roosevelt could have led that youth far afield and into strange places; he might have filled Lincoln's forecast to his Springfield audience of what an ambitious and temperamental President might still do, in spite of checks and balances. Roosevelt led American youth, the grandsons of pioneer fathers and clipper ship skippers, to our boundaries, and looked beyond them, and he filled with them our public services; army, navy—and State Department.

Then came another ten years and another generation, a generation very different from that of the 'nineties; a generation of those whose fathers followed the pioneers, and pressed upon their heels and drove them over the hills beyond. These the world war took and hammered together and made of them a new nation. They are we. They are America. They are the ones who are asking what caused the war? What is happening in China? What is the State Department doing in Nicaragua with marines? They do not know these places. They are only beginning to realize the concrete existence of America, of a government of the United States. This war-youth and middle age is a wide-spread but a local folk, the sons of those who paid the experts to keep "foreigners" off our backs while our faces were turned to the West and opportunity. They are the nation today, but to them the origins of the nation must be restated, clearly and patiently, with no assumption of any previous knowledge from school or from tradition.

It is necessary for the policies of the nation to be analyzed; the way things got to be as they are, told over and over again, for unlike any other nation in the

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world, we have a new public every year. The guardians of our national policies with regard to other nations do not realize that condition. They seem to think that they are being heckled, when in reality people do not know why things are happening and honestly wish to know, and feel that since they pay the bills they are entitled to know. It is a new public grown up within the boundaries beyond which our youth has looked with understanding so many times in the past.

It is a popular, semi-jocular cant phrase that the professor is visionary and unpractical. The professor shows himself in this matter, however, to realize the truth of the situation more clearly than the realist professional diplomat. It cannot fail to strike any teacher of history very forcibly that there is little knowledge of the history of the United States among present-day Americans. In response to that realization, several excellent books have appeared for general reading, treating special periods or certain tendencies in our history. Now comes Professor John H. Latané, of Johns Hopkins, with a very badly needed review* of the whole course of our policy development, from Washington to Coolidge, from 1774 to "the Rogers Act" of 1924, covering 150 years and drawing the events of that period into sequence and relation with each other and with the present.

In discussing our early attempts to alleviate war by proposing immunity of unfortified towns from attack, proscription of paper blockades, "free ships, free goods," protection of enemy private property, etc., he points out very truly that Jefferson's liberal ideas (and it might be added, Franklin's) "have practically all entered into the permanent policy of the United States, though some have not yet been realized." That is a very good way to put it, and is true. In discussing the post-Revolution war debt settlement, he goes rather searchingly into the free gifts to the insurgent colonies by the king of France, amounting to 11,000,000 livres (including remission of approximately 2,000,000 livres of interest on loans to us by the king of France) and replies thereby categorically to the insistence of the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate that these free gifts of money to help us establish ourselves had been "transferred into loans and repaid" (Senators Bruce and Borah colloquy, Congressional Record, January 22, 1925). Mr. Latané states very positively: "The sums advanced as gifts from the king of France were, of course, not included in the above settlement. Repayment of them was not expected, never demanded, and never offered."

Contrasting the use of force in China with the alleged "weak policy" of the United States "in relying on the promises and good faith of China without fully realizing that the imperial (or central) government could exercise little effective control over local conditions at the treaty ports," he quotes Humphrey Marshall (a relative of the Chief Justice) writing to Secretary Maroy in 1853: "It is my opinion that the highest interests of the United States are involved in sustaining China—maintaining order here, and gradually engrafting . . . the healthy principles which give life and health to governments, rather than to see China become the theatre of wide-spread anarchy and ultimately the prey of European ambition."

Spain's necessarily incoherent policy (assisting with money, in our Revolution, while fearing its effect on her own American colonies, and while laying the foundations of an extension of her empire to Florida, Louisiana and all trans-Mississippi) follows through our relations with Cuba, with the Caribbean region, with Mexico and Central America, merging with the remnants of the colonial rivalries of France and England to give impulse and direction to our own policy, first in self-protection, then in protection of the small states of Central America against Europe, and finally against themselves.

All this that he relates is now being strongly questioned by the new generation, at least as to the methods we have used to accomplish our purpose, and, by some, as to the first principles of our rights and duties in the matter and in those places. What we now need is a clear, convincing restatement of first principles in foreign policy by those responsible for its guardianship, formulation and execution. We are beginning, through the efforts of our historians, to have a consecutive recital of the development of those policies in what might be called popular form, accessible, that is, and intelligible to the annual new public. That is not the solution, however, of a real unrest with regard to "foreign" affairs; there is an uneasy feeling that a President of necessity devolves to his secretary of state the guardianship and execution of policy; that a secretary of state quite easily becomes dependent upon a small body of "experts" completely segregated and protected against all contact with the realities of American life; that such a small corps d'élite is not in fact responsible to anyone—and that in consequence the interests of the United States may suffer.

Our record, set forth in historical sequence, is full of inconsistencies. One woud not have it otherwise. It is not a sordid record, however; most emphatically not. Our principles of policy have been sound. Our method, not always. That is hypocrisy in the exact measure that ordinary human conduct is hypocritical; no more. There will be inconsistencies in the historians also. It is not clear for instance what Mr. Latané means, in speaking of Soviet Russia, by "the denial to others of the right to revolution on which our government was founded . . . ," but that also, one would not have otherwise. It is well known that even two eye-witnesses hardly can agree on all details. History is absorbed, not taught; but history in the making should be watched most carefully, and history-makers who resent watching should have double guards put about them, or responsible citizens set in their place.

**American Foreign Policy, by John H. Latané. New York: Doubleday, Page and Company. $6.00.*

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# THE PALLADIUM OF THE PROVINCES

BY GEORGE E. ANDERSON

THE divorcement of the country newspaper from partisan politics has been steadily progressing during the past twenty-five years and has come to be generally recognized as inevitable. The time when the typical daily paper in a city of from twenty-five to one hundred thousand inhabitants, or even more, was a party organ subservient merely to party needs has given way to a régime wherein a newspaper publisher realizes that to appeal to the members of one party is to appeal to but half of a possible clientele. Nowadays the provincial newspaper, even more definitely than its metropolitan contemporary, attempts to appeal to all members of its community; and, where it is partisan at all, its partisanship is no longer offensive and grows beautifully less.

It is a little over twenty-two years since the writer gave up the publication of a daily newspaper in the capital city of a Mississippi valley state, and most of that score and more of summers and winters have been spent abroad. The contrast between the provincial daily paper of today and its prototype of twenty-five years ago, brought into strong relief by this absence, is striking. A few months ago I visited the old home town. Though larger, it was essentially the same community. A younger generation had come to the fore but as a newspaper clientele there was practically no change in it. The newspaper establishments had been enlarged and improved somewhat, but not sensationally. There were the same dark, dingy and somewhat disreputable editorial rooms, the same desks in disarray, the same old constant click of the telegraph instrument, the same rat-tat-tat of the typewriters, noises in the street outside, the roar of the press and the cries of newsboys as the edition went to press, the same old paper and printers' ink smell—almost everything seemed the same. "But the romance has gone out of the business," my old colleague complained. "The old spirit has gone out of it. It lacks life. These youngsters"—he waved a hand at half a dozen young reporters—"don't know what it is to go out and get news. They sit at a telephone and expect it to come to them. And a surprising thing about it is that much of it comes."

The time has gone when youngsters, as in my day, literally run around town to visit the courts, the state house, the city hall, the undertakers and other sources of news, in a final rush for the afternoon editions. I remember when I was first examined physically for life insurance, the examining physician was astounded at my lung power. I had acquired it on my reportorial rounds, literally running up stairways two steps at a time to get the latest news before going to press. Later the bicycle and an occasional elevator facilitated things somewhat. The flivver was unknown. The telephone we regarded as a last-minute resort. To us it meant second-hand news. A telephone story was a story without local color, without finish, a piece of imperfect workmanship.

The flivver and the telephone, especially the telephone, have changed things. Has it been for the better? Not in the matter of news. Most country newspapers nowadays are dead in the way of local color, brightness, crispness, newsiness. The spirit of the telephone permeates everything. The first-hand touch is lacking. Most papers contain more actual information, especially in the way of telegraphic reports, than ever before. The world is covered in a manner that scarcely seemed possible to the provincial newspaper twenty years or so ago, but it is syndicate product. Much human interest material has been supplanted by the "feature" element. There is less pure community matter and more Dotty Dimples matter from a metropolitan syndicate. We have health advice, crossword puzzles, bridge games, advice on how to raise children, beauty hints, fashions, full directions for the lovelorn —what will you or what have you? The comic strip stretches its forced fun across every sheet in the land. Of course public taste may have changed, but there are some comic strips which would have seemed quite silly in the moron days of twenty-five years ago. Once a local daily was local; nowadays it is part of a chain and the chief difference between a Maine and a California country newspaper is in the names in the society columns—and often there is little difference there. In short, papers have become standardized. The blighting American passion for uniformity has come to control the newspaper craft. A present-day country newspaper seldom reflects the personality of its editor or publisher. It is merely a news machine. Country journalism no longer represents a profession or calling. It has become a business.

Moreover this is a phase of the situation with which one cannot quarrel successfully, for it has always been an axiom of the newspaper craft that it is unwise to quarrel with one's bread and butter. The greatest change in the provincial newspapers in the United States in the past twenty-five years has come in a business way. The situation is illustrated by my old paper. That paper was sold in 1900 for something less than $50,000, and that was considered a very fair price. Three years ago, the same paper was sold for over $200,000—and that, too, was considered a fair price. Such values are typical of the business in general. Yet the paper when last sold was no better newspaper, no better edited, no higher in its standing in the community or in the state; it really contained no more or better news, all things considered, than when it was sold a quarter of a century ago.

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The secret of the increased price lies in the fact that the paper was a profitable proposition at even the bloated value. Twenty years or so ago comparatively few country dailies really made money, except, perhaps, in the fact that they were being built up into more valuable properties. There were not so many readers compared with the population, and advertising rates were comparatively low. It cost less to get them out but the income was much less in proportion than it now is. On the other hand, most country dailies today pay a good return upon large investments. In conducting a country daily nowadays a publisher pays much less attention to politics and more to the business office, and he has found that the new policy pays. In divorcing the business from politics, also, there has been less of a tendency on the part of politicians to invade the newspaper field by establishing personal organs, and the evanescent fly-by-night sheet is now practically unknown. Such enterprises cost too much, even in these days of million-dollar primary elections. The irresponsible competitor in most newspaper fields has been eliminated, and with this has come a tendency to combine. Many important cities which a few years ago supported, or were supposed to support, four newspapers now actually support two. In many respects they are better newspapers, because they are stronger in the business office. This tendency has also been intensified—let me approach this phase of the change with due caution and circumspection—by a practical monopoly of telegraphic news held by some of the older papers through their ownership of a telegraphic service franchise. All these factors work for a stronger newspaper and inferentially we naturally anticipate that they work for better newspapers. But are they better?

That is a matter of opinion rather than of fact, and far be it from me to impose a personal judgment upon a reluctant newspaper fraternity. Nevertheless I venture the opinion that the typical non-metropolitan daily has lost much of its chief charm and power by attempting to lift itself out of its proper class and aping the methods and features of its metropolitan contemporaries which of necessity lack that direct personal touch with their readers possible only in comparatively small communities. The provincial daily also is being standardized out of its proper relation with its clientele. As to general features, comparing country newspapers of today with what they were twenty or twenty-five years ago, I am disposed to believe that the present-day publication is far better than its predecessors. It certainly approaches the metropolitan standard more closely, though that may be a fault rather than a virtue. Standardization has introduced in the country newspaper field a thousand and one features which represent a distinct advance in the range, quality and quantity of reading matter of a general nature. The literary standard on the whole is higher. Most matter now published is better prepared than in the old days.

Nevertheless these are not the only criteria of an ideal provincial newspaper or any other newspaper. Most non-metropolitan newspaper men readily admit that there is too much of this good thing in their publications. Many of them acknowledge that their metropolitan features are leading them into a static situation next door to the morgue. The broad range of sympathetic interest in home affairs, the never-ending panorama of local life pictured by home folk for home folk, only too often have given way to the metropolitan interpretation of life. I have no particular quarrel with the comic strip, Dotty Dimples or a Florida market menu for a Minnesota town. The comic strip was conceived in cleverness, delivered into real and prosperous life and now has been exposed upon the rocks of syndicated banality. In due time the remains will be properly removed. Doubtless also Dotty Dimples has her usefulness. Perhaps we had better keep Dotty and let nature take its course with the comic strip.

Too much "patent insides" the modern provincial publisher admits. Even in this, however, complaint may well hesitate. Trace back the origin of the term, and one comes to a more primitive day, not much over a quarter of a century ago, when many country dailies and most country weeklies were printed on one large sheet. The inside of such a paper, consisting of telegraphic and general news, and often of editorial matter as well, was printed in a metropolis by a "newspaper agency." The half-printed sheets were sent to the city of publication by express a few hours before publication was due. The local news and any late grape-vine telegraphic news and perhaps some local editorial matter, made up the outside of the paper, the other side of the sheet, which was printed at home. On the first paper I served we used to receive the metropolitan half of our issue from St. Louis—when the trains were on time. When the trains were late, however, or if the edition failed to arrive—here let us pause in complete silence for five minutes while we contemplate real tragedy. It really was not as funny then as it seems now.

But the craft survived and soon came progress in the shape of column-size stereotype plates containing telegraphic news and miscellany which also came daily by express—when the trains arrived—and enabled us to print the entire paper at home. In those days many provincial dailies were edited largely with saw and mitre. Still later came the stereotype matrix or mat with the "feature" matter; and by these mats are many of the provincial dailies of today—and many more pretentious journals as well—largely constituted. Of course most such present-day newspapers receive at least a fair telegraphic service, some of them even a metropolitan service, and the miscellaneous material received by the mat route today is far in advance of that served in the old days. Doubtless such material serves a purpose and meets a demand which can be reached in no better way. My old colleagues tell me there is a demand for such features. They also tell me that all the papers have them. Aye, there's the

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rub. So each paper remains in the standardized procession.

Now it requires no great amount of philosophy or acumen to realize that the chief charm, and in a way the chief strength, of a provincial newspaper in the old days was its individuality. It not only reflected the intimate life of the community in all such community's peculiarities, but it also reflected directly the personality and character of its editor and publisher, who more often than not were united in the same person. This personality, this individuality, might not always have been attractive in the highest degree, were not always gems of purest rays serene, but what they were they were without doubt or question, and they left a stamp upon the community they served which was distinctive and on the whole inspiring. There were some really great men in the craft.

I think it is beyond question that the country newspaper of today in its neutral, impersonal standards has less influence upon a community than its more virile though perhaps less financially successful predecessor. Nor does it follow necessarily that this impersonal, neutral sort of newspaper can be the only successful provincial newspaper. There are a few outstanding examples in which editors of the old-fashioned, personal journalism sort have built up newspaper properties of commanding influence and with national, even international, reputations. Conceding that both the abilities and the field of the average provincial editor in the United States do not promise the success of "Marse Henry" Watterson, Samuel Bowles or William Allen White, or that of perhaps a score of somewhat lesser lights, it must be admitted that there is still a field for personal journalism and that there is still a demand for commanding personalities in the provincial press. After all, why should a country daily attempt to compete with the metropolitan newspapers? The provincial press has a high calling. It has a field peculiarly its own. It is neither necessary nor desirable that it should return to the days of political organ-grinding and shiny, threadbare editorial trousers, but at least it should bespeak for itself that individuality which the standardizing policy of today tends to eliminate.

## *Resurgam*

Grimness in silence, Thou, my God, salute,
hooded in purpose, motionless in growth,
broken like hostbread to Thy worship's oath,
intact in essence, one though convolute.

I am unworthy now, with edges turned;
perceive the mound of dust about my feet,
worn from sharp purpose in a futile sweet
belief in living which were better spurned.

Grant me my strength again with moving pain,
that after regrowth may mine edge be keen;
then come Thou in Thy singleness to glean
my dust and find me, an impatient grain.

JOHN SHERRY MANGAN.

# FROM ISHMAEL'S BREVIARY

By ALBERT BLOCH

I ONCE knew an astronomer—not very well, but well enough to discover very soon that, although he was a learned man and knew something about nearly everything, he knew nothing about stars. He did not even know that they exist. Whether he had ever discovered a new planet, I cannot say, but he had never had the good fortune to discover an old star. He told me so himself. I had not asked him; I had merely made some reference to the stars and he had informed me that there were no such things, and he began offering me a substitute for stars, which I remember thinking rather silly, since he didn't even know what they are. So I paid no heed to what he said on the subject, but let him talk on and on, the while my mind played curiously about the phenomenon of this astronomer who had never seen a star. Perhaps he is still talking—I shouldn't wonder; at any rate, my mind is still playing curiously about the phenomenon, and it wouldn't surprise me if it continued doing so until the end of my days. For it has made the strange discovery, that the solution of all our modern perplexities depends upon our undertanding of just such weird phenomena as this.

* * *

Deus ex machina? Where do they get that "ex"? They've turned Him into one!

* * *

Bernhard Berenson, in the preface to his essay on Venetian painting, speaks of "our faith in science," and says that because of it (and of our faith in the power of work) "we are instinctively in sympathy with the renaissance." Perhaps this is the key both to the renaissance and our own age. In the ages preceding the renaissance, faith in God was not only the important thing, it was the thing upon which all life and its expression depended. We have traveled far since then; but the people of the renaissance must have been even faster travelers, for they had nearly caught up with us long before ever we began our journey. It is a significant sign of the obtuseness of the present age, which is largely an expression of the belief that faith in God is merely a superstitious survival, that we should now accept this nonsense of our faith in science as a matter of course and with no awakening of any suspicion that there are superstitions less excusable and certainly far more stupid than belief in supernatural forces.

* * *

He had a broad and elastic mind. It spread out in all directions, covering a vast area thinly. It trickled over the surface of the universe.

* * *

The psychologist—I look upon his face and I see the soul of him writhing in hell from that day when fell the rebel angels. He walks across green fields, and beneath his tread I know the grass turns black. He smiles, and the blue of heaven grows sick and livid. As he plucks a rose to drink its fragrance, it withers and its stench rises upon the hopeless air and poisons the breath of the twilight. He stands listening, and the birds in the trees cease their evensong and I hear the croak of ravens; the eagle falls dead in his flight, and a carrion thing wheels up from earth and beats its wings heavily into the setting sun. He gazes about him into the landscape, and the landscape disintegrates; the trees' foliage is blasted and falls, their trunks stand naked and frozen. And the evening star, but now become visible, seeing itself beheld of such eyes, bursts into rotten phosphorescence. And through the world's night rides the Rider upon a pale horse.

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# THE PLAY AND THE SCREEN

By R. DANA SKINNER

## *Merry-Go-Round*

RICHARD HERNDON was the first of the Broadway producers to catch the new spirit in musical reviews as promoted by the English Charlot's Review, and by the Garrick Gaieties and the Grand Street Follies. Americana, which he produced last year, combined many of the best qualities of each, and added to them a feature distinctly of Mr. Herndon's own—a small chorus consisting of specialty artists, girls who could add mightily to the evening's variety by individual stunts. Although Merry-Go-Round lacks much of the comic-strip wit of Americana (meaning that it lacks a libretto by J. P. McEvoy) it is nevertheless unusually sympathetic and delightful entertainment, overflowing with youthful spirits and capable performers.

Before long, we suspect that some of the larger managers will discover that costly tinsel is quite unnecessary to attract the crowds. I am told that one musical play of the late season demanded the services of forty-eight stage-hands to handle the elaborate scenic equipment, and that all other items were in proportion. The show itself was fairly good, but as it could only meet expenses when playing to capacity houses, it was foredoomed to short life. The public, moreover, is getting just a trifle tired of lavishness, particularly when uncontrolled by good taste. It has discovered that the quick stepping, mentally alert intimate review makes the evening pass just as rapidly as the ponderous affair of golden costumes. Merry-Go-Round comes at just the right time to brighten the jaded spirits and to comfort one with the thought that money isn't everything.

The settings of the new Herndon review are by no means as satirical and amusing as those which John Held, Jr., contrived for Americana last year, but they are adequate as a background and have a pleasing simplicity. The music by Henry Souvaine and Jay Gorney is rhythmic and purposeful, even if it is vaguely reminiscent of many tunes that have gone before. It is well orchestrated and conducted with fine spirit by Gene Salzer. But when all is said and done, it is that group of specialty girls that carries one over the weak spots and gives the performance all the delight of "amateur night" combined with professional ability. Like the Garrick Gaieties, it is essentially a young persons' evening, from which the monologues of William Collier and Marie Cahill would never be missed. The mood and the spirit are both those of exuberant youth.

Several individual numbers stand out. There is, for example, a quite priceless skit on the ambulance-chasing brand of lawyers—a quartette impersonating the firm of Mockowitz, Gogeloch, Babblekroit and Svonk! It is worth the price of admission to hear Philip Loeb, as the junior, carol forth his name of Svonk—as if fearful lest someone would forget him in the rush! There is also an excellent song rejoicing in the appropriate name of Sentimental Silly, sung in turn by three couples, among them rising the excellent voice of Louise Richardson. If Philip Loeb's bathroom tenor scene is not very original, he at least carries it out with all its mournful triumph. The song of Hogan's Alley as sung by Libby Holman to the pantomime accompaniment of almost the entire company is low-brow, if you like, but somehow it succeeds in conveying an astonishingly authentic mood.

A young lady named Joyce Booth, who appears in several numbers, manages to convince you that she could be an excellent actress in a real part. Among the dancers, Helen Howell and Doris Vinton show decided ability, and one Georgie Ingram seems to have the material of a star. Evelyn Bennett, whose tomboy personality is lavishly played up, is exceedingly energetic but inclined to overdo things. There are many others who deserve mention, but as in all such cases, it is hard to identify them by name in the swift jumble of movement. There is extraordinarily little of an objectionable nature in this review, and it contains much that serves to make it first-class entertainment for a summer evening.

## *Seventh Heaven on the Screen*

WILLIAM FOX has put that highly successful play of two seasons back, Seventh Heaven, on the screen. The original play was by Austin Strong and the present production is directed by Frank Borzage. With the exception of a poorly managed ending, it is one of the most touching and beautifully rendered screen stories I have seen in many a day, in which Janet Gaynor plays a typical Gish part with consummate artistry.

It may be recalled that Seventh Heaven is the story of a young worker in the sewers of Paris, and his rise, first to the position of street-cleaner, and then to the summit of love and self-sacrifice entailed by the war. He boasts at first of his atheism, only to discover God through the devotion of a little girl whom he rescues from her brutalizing sister and through the loss of his sight which gives him a higher vision. The scenes of the story carry us from the most sordid slums of Paris, through the battle of the Marne with the famous sortie of the Paris taxi-cabs, to the reunion of Diane and Chico in their garret close to the stars. The freedom of the screen permits many stirring scenes which it would be impossible to render on the stage.

It is only the closing episodes which are marred by an artificial attempt to create audience suspense. You see Chico dying in the arms of the regimental chaplain. The latter brings back to Diane the medal which Chico bequeathed to her. She gives way to despair and a momentary doubt of God. Then Chico comes back, blinded to be sure, but alive and strong. However much this may soothe the sympathies of the audience, it has the nature of a trick. It is never adequately explained how the chaplain could be at Chico's death-bed and never hear of his almost miraculous recovery. What the scenario writer seems to have missed in this case is the well-known fact that an audience is just as much interested in suspense for one of the characters as for itself—often more so. An audience likes to know what the characters on the stage do not know. It likes to take its suspense by proxy, armed all the time with greater knowledge than the characters in the play. This would be a far better picture, with much less anticlimax, if the audience were allowed to know the circumstances of Chico's recovery. Then the spectator would no longer hold the suspicion that a happy ending had been resurrected, so to speak, from the grave.

For the rest, the story is handled with exquisite tenderness and a full fund of humor that somehow remains essentially French. There is little or nothing of the Hollywood stamp on the film, and much of its charm comes from the omission of

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needless captions. In this it is reminiscent of The Last Laugh. The story is permitted to make its own points, with the aid of extremely well-balanced acting and ingenious photography. Above all, the performances of Charles Farrell as Chico and Miss Gaynor as Diane have a very real distinction. A more unmannered, simple and moving portrayal than Miss Gaynor's would be hard to find.

### *Concerning Spoken Movies*

THE production of Seventh Heaven is preceded by a brief program of Movietone—a Fox-Case development of movies with speech. From the perfection with which a song by Raquel Meller, the drilling of West Point cadets, and the antics of Ben Bernie and his orchestra are conveyed, it is evident that we must now take serious account of the spoken movie as a forthcoming medium. Not only is the synchronization of speech and movement perfect, but the quality of the individual voices is even more discernable than over the average radio. We have here the elements of an art which will bring the stage and screen closer than ever. But what will the effect be on motion-picture technique? Shall we continue to have scenes that jump all over creation? Or will the movies take on the continuity of a play? And how will spoken words affect the illusion of historical plays—particularly those in which an ancient or foreign language is assumed?

Even today, it is curious enough in a picture about France, such as Seventh Heaven, to see the lips of the actors forming English words. Will the sound of English words decrease the illusion still more, or shall we gradually accept the convention just as we do in the theatre? The very silence of the screen has hitherto been one of its most valuable distinctions from the spoken stage. In Ben Hur, for example, there is nothing to tell us that we are not back in Roman times, witnessing a sort of stirring "news-reel" of events of the day. We do not have to adjust ourselves to a Roman senator uttering Shakespearean pentametres. Whatever the screen may gain in native pictures, it will lose some of its force in re-creating history or foreign illusion.

Another disadvantage will come in having to endure the speech of those screen actors who, up to the present, have had no training in diction. The imagined voice of a beauteous heroine is so much more alluring than the actuality is likely to prove! No longer will an adorable face be enough. On the other hand, a new field of value will be opened up to actors who have had stage training. They will be better able to compete with sheer charm of feature. The net result may be to bring a more finely balanced talent to the motion pictures, and to put a premium on qualities that the screen has hitherto been able to ignore, to its own injury.

But the question of the form which the new productions will take is perhaps the most important of all. The charm of dialogue lies largely in its continuity and flow. Movie scenes are now cut to the bare essentials of action. With speech a new element is brought in—the action of thought and emotion as expressed in words. It would seem quite probable that spoken movies will have longer scenes, that fine plays, when adapted, will have to retain much of their best dialogue, and that direct writing for the screen by good authors will assume a new importance. This alone may greatly enhance the standards of the movies, and give them, particularly for small towns, an altogether new educational value. The smallest places may yet have a chance to see and hear Margaret Anglin in the spacious verses of Greek tragedy, and other noted actors in the rôles which have brought them fame. The possibility is alluring.

*TWO TIMELY PAMPHLETS*

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# POEMS

## *Six Cranes at Dusk*

I came to the lake and six cranes were there
And twilight was there and a thin mist fell,
The cranes were like blooms that subsist on air,
Amazingly white and spirituelle.

The cranes were frail loiterers at the edge
Of twilight, deep plunged in a silver sleep,
Or lovers transfixed in the motionless sedge,
Or tenuous pale ghosts that the shadows keep.

The twilight blew thin and the moon came up
And wove the mists in tapestries of gleam,
The mallow-rose lifted a silver cup,
Immaculate white cranes stirred from their dream:

Tranquil and radiant as saints' avatars,
Or like moon-moths, they ascended the light—
Their long legs latticed the sprays of stars
That clung to the high oriels of night!

Like snowflakes that melt as they skim through air,
They were lost—like the throb of an ancient tune—
They had crossed the marshlands of stars and there,
I think, had found refuge, on lakes of the moon.

HENRI FAUST.

## *Riviera: Noon*

Here, where the legions clanked along the shore
Where flashed the buckler of the Saracen,
And princes' castles gleamed with armored men,
And jogging jennets holy pilgrims bore,
The promenade is filled with people, more
And more till noon. The hour strikes; suddenly then
The throngs flock homeward, as scared shorebirds when
The sportsman hastens, driving them before.

Does it not seem, that distant humming sound,
The clangor of a tocsin struck to tell
Of Guelph marauders on a foray bound,
A summons to the liege lord's citadel,
Or where monks keep their little square of ground?
It is the ringing of the luncheon bell.

MOREYS JEPHSON O'CONOR.

## *After Storm*

The golden mine of heaven is barren now,
  Not a nugget left, the caves are black,
Down on the dusky meadows far below
  Every leaf and twig holds a gleaming sack;

Now we may go out in the swirling blue
  Drenched with the dust of Pleiads and of Mars,
A dark hand sprung the stormy sluice, and you
  And I may thrust our hands into the stars.

POWER DALTON.

## *Acreage*

Tan cows and jade-green kale
In my side yard—
For you, a terraced garden
And a boulevard.

Trails through a dogwood thicket
For my feet to walk upon,
Paths built around a lily-pool
To decorate your lawn.

For my doorstep, children
Of various ages.
For your veranda—love-birds
In wicker cages.

Little grimy footprints
Within my door—
Kashans and old Bokharas
Upon your floor.

For your modern art's sake
A spotted cubist cow,
For my true perception,
A henna-colored sow.

And yet, a printed portrait
Of a lady . . . on my wall.
And yet, a Millet peasant painting
In your hall!

QUEENE B. LISTER.

## *Melody for a Wind-Flower*

Light, light,
Heaven bright,
Even music falters
Singing the
Anemone
At her vernal altars.

Hush, hush,
Let the thrush
Be her only singer—
Only shade
And the glade
Green around her linger.

MARGERY ATWOOD TODAHL.

## *To An Ancestress at Church*

A thousand years ago you must have come
On a spring morning fair as this is fair,
To kneel in such rich twilight and be dumb
Before the Presence there.

You also watched a priest who gravely wrought
Transcendent miracles with bread and wine;
Who knows your inarticulate prayer was not
The self-same prayer as mine?

PHYLLIS MCGINLEY.

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# BOOKS

*The Letters of Mrs. Thrale, selected with an introduction by R. Brimley Johnson. London: John Lane. $1.80.*

NOW that scholars are culling from the immense store of letters and memoirs of the period of Samuel Johnson these extracts of most interest, students of that period who have neither the time nor the patience to wade through the original works are enabled to read what is most to the point in them in selections. To begin with, there is the truly admirable Dr. Johnson and Fanny Burney of Professor Tinker, which appeared some fifteen years ago. Then but a short time ago I had the pleasure of reviewing in The Commonweal a book of extracts from the writings of Laetitia Hawkins, daughter of one of Johnson's biographers. And now comes a collection of letters from Mrs. Thrale, the third of the group of writers contemporary with the great lexicographer. This is in some ways the most interesting—more interesting than the dull Hawkins and even than Boswell, for apart from her connection with Johnson, Mrs. Thrale was a really attractive character, which is perhaps more than can be said for the Scot. She was a Celt, too, being a Welsh lady of ancient family, Hester Lynch Salusbury, who had early been married to the wealthy London brewer, Thrale.

Thrale was not greatly attached to his wife nor she to him. He wanted—and he got—a lady of learning, for she was certainly that, who could provide him with what he loved even as much as those pleasures of the table which in the end killed him—really good society. Johnson was the centre of that society, and for fifteen years was almost settled at Streatham, Thrale's country house near London. Around this centre revolved nearly every person of literary importance at the time. In one of these letters Mrs. Thrale, in her bright way, touches off those who were present on a certain occasion. They are worth considering with the notes that Mr. Brimley Johnson might have given but does not give to his readers—his only fault, and a grave one. "Mrs. Montague was brilliant in diamonds, solid in judgment, critical in talk." This was the original "blue-stocking," doyenne of the literary tea-parties of the time. "Sophy smiled"—Sophy Streatfield, constantly mentioned in the Burney Diaries, a young lady who, without any provocation, could and did shed the largest and most pearly tears, a thing which endeared her to the heart of Thrale for some curious reason. "Piozzi sung"; he was to be her second husband. "Pepys panted with admiration"—the physician who attended George III in his insanity, a man of note in his day. "Johnson was good-humored, Lord John Clinton attentive, Dr. Bowdler lame"—this was the man from whose treatment of Shakespeare we get the term "to bowdlerise." And so on through the list of guests.

Thrale died of apoplexy due to his persistent overeating. Johnson was one of his executors and there must always be a suspicion that he thought he might well take Thrale's place in the affections of the widow and at the fireside of Streatham. Mrs. Thrale, if anything of the kind was ever in the wind, was in no way willing, nor did she for a moment admit that Johnson was, as he evidently desired to be, the dictator of her doings. She determined to marry for the second time to please herself, and chose Piozzi, to the intense wrath of Johnson; of her children, apparently an odious pack; and of Fanny Burney, little prig that she was at heart, who was afterward herself to marry a foreigner and a dull one, which Piozzi was not. Piozzi was blamed by Johnson and his party because he was an alien, a fiddler, and a Catholic. Whatever his avocation,

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he had made a good deal of money by it, for in one of those letters his wife relates what very considerable sums Piozzi had paid to free her house of mortgages, and on building a new abode in Wales.

He was only a nominal Catholic, it would appear, for he abandoned his religion, if he had ever practised it, when he married, and steadily attended the services of the Established Church till his death. Poor Mrs. Piozzi had much trouble with her property and it is interesting to note that in one of her lawsuits her legal adviser was Charles Butler, the author of The Book of the Church, and the constant antagonist of Bishop Milner throughout the fight over the Veto. Butler, like all Catholics, was forbidden by the laws to plead in the courts of law as a barrister or even to fill the position of a solicitor. How then did he figure as a lawyer at all? He was one of those who were called chamber lawyers, who got up the law for others to lay it before the courts. It must have been a galling position for a man really learned in the law to feel that he must thus submit to having his learning distilled through some much less competent person, and doubtless stimulated his unceasing labors for emancipation. At any rate Butler is one of the numerous interesting persons who crops up in these letters.

Mrs. Piozzi was an untiring correspondent, and in her eightieth year wrote a sheaf of so-called "love letters" to a young actor named Conway. The editor of this book thinks those letters were tampered with, and quotes none of them. It seems to be a fact that Mrs. Piozzi had none but a kind of maternal affection for the young man, an affection shared by her great friend Mrs. Pennington, to whom many of the letters in this collection are addressed. Mrs. Piozzi was an undaunted soul, for she tells us that in her eightieth year her prowess as a swimmer in the sea at Weston-super-Mare astonished the visitors, as indeed it well might. But after boasting of this she says that Zenobia Stevens, a neighbor of hers, had a ninety-nine-year lease from the Duke of Bolton, "lived it out" and went herself to restore it to the Duke who, like a "fine old English gentleman," gave her the use of the house "free for the rest of her life. Since (in the century before this) the old Countess of Desmond, according to Irish tradition, came to an untimely end at the age of 120 in the County of Waterford by falling out of a cherry tree which she had climbed to pick its fruit, there can hardly have been two more sporting old ladies than Zenobia and her neighbor. But even such must come to an end some day and Mrs. Piozzi, gallant to the last, died in her eighties. Her husband had long preceded her.

BERTRAM C. A. WINDLE.

*Recent Developments in the Social Sciences: A Symposium. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Company.*

THIS symposium of experts—Elwood on sociology, Wissler on anthropology, Gault on psychology, John M. Clark on economics, Merriam on political science, Barnes on history, and Sauer on cultural geography—gives avaluable account of present social science, theory and trend in the secularist school of thought. It presents a record of indefatigable work in the collection of vast information. Moreover it shows that the newer school of social scientists know fewer things that are not so than did their predecessors, and more things that are so. They know more now of the "law written in their own hearts" and more of the law written in nature.

Yet even though the crassly materialistic days are gone, this volume suffices to prove over again, and at times abundantly, Newman's thesis in his Idea of a University. The newer men emphasize the importance of the mind; they find a place for free will even when they theoretically deny it; they are more realistic and they embrace more facts; they have more regard for the individual and the group as against the great society or the state; they are more humble; they are less given to generalizations based on biology; and they emphasize what ought to be. But withal they sorely miss knowing what Newman knew so well—and Saint Thomas before him, and Saint Paul before him—that, in actual fact, men's minds are so darkened in understanding and weakened in will that revelation is in practice needed to guide us to the truth about man's nature, aims and laws, and that the help of God is necessary for us to do what we know we ought to do. Such an idea is, of course, anathema to the secular theorists of the social sciences and the result of their denial is clear in their theories and clear in contemporary life.

If this sounds patronizing, it is not really so. Indeed, reading this volume, one is struck by the progress made in social theory, and one wants the facts they have collected utilized by more Catholic students of social life. Our principles of ethics and moral theology cannot be applied accurately without a thorough knowledge of the facts. We have a head start on the secularist school because we have a body of principles. But in the collection of facts and in the popularization of the conclusions they have reached on the basis of their facts and their bias, they have outstripped us.

As one reads this book, outlines flash before the mind of numerous studies that Catholics might make upon what the old principles of Catholic morals call for in the changing conditions of an industrialized world. Studies are needed of the groups in our society, of the relations between them, of the form of organizations these groups require to attain their just position, of inter-group organization, of the relative importance of these groups in relation to their functions both now and in a rightly ordered society, of the sanctities the individual should possess before the group and society, and of how these sanctities are to be defended.

Every such study would embrace the principles, the facts, the ideal to be attained and a projected method of accomplishing the ideal, even when preliminary studies of the facts alone or the principles alone would be necessary. This would develop, to borrow a phrase from continental Catholic social scientists, a sociology imbued with the "solidarism" of organized groups that are composed of strong individuals, to take the place of mere social psychology, and the sociologies of individualism, of regionalism, of primary groups alone, of pluralism, of vague social betterment, of abnormal types, of communism. Fortunately the field has already been well spaded and the seed has been sown.

The most satisfying articles in this symposium are those on sociology, economics, anthropology and cultural geography. Barnes's article on history, while it shows a great knowledge of the history of history and a keen appreciation of the fact that history is a record of everything man has done and not merely an account of wars, politics and great men, is vitiated by flippant blasphemy. Professor Merriam in his article on political science passes over many important recent developments in too cavalier a fashion. The article on psychology limits too much the psychological field that is of interest to the social sciences. One would like to see articles also on ethics and on social jurisprudence, both national and international. Surely they are part of the social sciences. One expects, too, a more extended account of cultural history.

R. A. MCGOWAN.

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*Geist und Gesicht des Bolschewismus, by Rene Fülöp-Miller. Vienna: Amalthea-Verlag.*

THIS is one of the most remarkable books on Bolshevism I have read, for two reasons, one superficial, one more profound. For the first, it is illustrated with a lavishness so far unequaled. More than five hundred pictures, chiefly photographs, illustrate the external aspect of Russia under the Soviets. We can see what the central part of the Kremlin looks like now that the cult of Lenin (efficiently embalmed by a German chemist and "good for seventy years," as someone has remarked) has been substituted for the devotion to the Blessed Virgin. We can see what the museums and churches are like, now that Sovietism has turned them to propaganda—not without, let it be said, a great deal of care for archaeology and artistic interest, but still with the intention of impressing the popular mind with the tenets of anti-religion and anti-aristocracy. We can, finally, look into the working-men's clubs, the workshops, the farms, the proletarian theatres, and see the progress of that mechanization of social life which the writer insists is one of the most marked features of the Soviet system.

The book, however, is not a mere album of photographs accompanied by a perfunctory and superficially-written text. Herr Fülöp-Miller has made a thorough first-hand study of Soviet Russia from practically every point of view but the political. In his task he has had the coöperation of the Soviet authorities and if the result must be little to their liking, it cannot be said that the writer started out with White prejudices. On the contrary, he has one terrible chapter on the iniquities of the czarist régime, and one of his chief points of view is that Sovietism is in many respects a development out of czarist tyranny on the one hand and Russian apocalyptic sectarianism on the other—with one very important addition, namely, the trend to the ultra-industrialist conception of society. With this exception, most of the material for the formation of the Bolshevik state was ready to hand before 1917; all that was needed was the impression of a powerful personality, and that was found in Lenin, to whose demagogic genius the writer devotes a notable chapter. It was he who completed the westernization of Russia which Peter the Great, working entirely against the natural genius and tradition of the Russian people, began; he who, in the result, Sovietism, produced a remarkable approximation to the ideal often alleged by "proletarian" orators to be peculiar to the super-capitalist state, to the United States, to Great Britain or Germany—the ideal of the complete mechanization of the worker.

The pre-revolution mechanistic physiological experiments of Pavlov, who reduced the human body to a bundle of chemical reactions and glandular reflexes, prepared the way for the application à outrance of the Marxist doctrine of economic determinism in which mechanical futurist music, a Taylor-system of unexampled efficiency, a machine-like conception of the theatre, and an education fitted for Robots, were all harnessed in the service of the state. The total impression may be summed up in Herr Fülöp-Miller's words: "A world is in the process of becoming in Russia, a world with no personal joy in life, with pictures lacking color, music lacking harmony, Weltanschauung lacking the interior principles of intelligence, a mechanized world in which there will be only soulless human beings," in a word, a vast experiment in producing a new biological type of superman without soul or imagination.

In so far as this is a generalization the picture may well be overdrawn, and Herr Fülöp-Miller, studiously avoiding the discussion of current politics in the Soviet Union, gives us no


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clue to the question of whether the experiment will succeed. But he does show, by word and picture, by appeal to Soviet philosophy and the day-to-day life of factory and school, that it is being made, on a more formidable and conscious scale than history has ever known before. "Freedom is a bourgeois prejudice" was Lenin's slogan. According to this fascinating book, it is the keynote to what is being attempted in Russia today.

JOHN STAPLETON.

*Mary Was Love, by Guy Fletcher. New York: George H. Doran Company. $2.00.*

THIS author writes his novel under an impulse strongly romantic. The consequent warmth and emotional intimacy in his style overcome, by their very directness and enthusiasm, the compromise which the elements of his tale would ordinarily make with realism. The customary appeal of a charming tale of tragedy in love out of which a new life grows is here; so is the unabashed indulgence in ecstatic speeches and highly colored descriptions, all of which such a creative temperament would be expected to sanction and such a quick, responsive nature might be looked upon to employ. Mary Was Love thus turns out to be a conventional story of a sort we yet stop to read and admire because the intention is artistically honest, the manner affectionate, and the motive as sincere as the viewpoint it advocates is sound.

The question of frankness in modern fiction has received a wide and varied treatment which has not, however, been as general or as exhaustive as occasion has permitted it to be. Invariably the critical canon concerning frankness—a quality strong in this story—has been applied to the subject-matter of extreme realism, its artistic values and the limits to which analysis and selection may be permitted to go in this direction. But there is, certainly, a kind of frankness in the work of the romantic imagination which we must be fully as careful to define if the issues behind the narrative craft are not to become thoroughly confused. To record, with an effect of spontaneity and honest enthusiasm, experience and idea, attitude and fancy, must be as firm and steady an ability on the part of the romantic as it is a duty on the part of the realist with his different motive and effect. The always admired genuineness is there if this frank expression is given to the emotions and to the prejudices of the writer, and the result may be as noteworthy whether it is arrived at by the means of David Garnett or of Elinor Wylie, of Walter de la Mare or of Compton Mackenzie.

Of these writers it is Mr. Mackenzie whom Mr. Fletcher most admires and resembles. In his style many devices and phrases recall Carnival, and The Vanity Girl, and in theme there is a clear reference to the youth adventure as the author of Sinister Street, and Guy and Pauline has given it. In experience and disposition the two are much akin, and though Mr. Fletcher is not able to use English ways, Catholic backgrounds, and the colorful movement of contemporary life with such effect as the older writer, he approaches his task with the same delight and intention, and his novel has much the same appeal. Often trite in situation, it still overcomes the rash unqualified sentimentality of so many less skilful stories by Catholic writers and gives promise of Mr. Fletcher's one day producing an important work in this field. The characters and scenes, though not achieved by adventuresome or original means, are credible and engaging, and the whole romance is relieved by a tone of sympathy and clear-headed sincerity which warrants an interest in what the author will, in the future, do with his ideas.

MORTON DAUWEN ZABEL.

*Exploring the Universe, by Henshaw Ward. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company. $3.50.*

AMONG recent volumes of scientific popularization Henshaw Ward's Exploring the Universe may be praised, aside from aught else, for considering its subjects—matter and life—on the thoroughly logical basis that ". . . science cannot lay a finger upon a spiritual religion." And in a book presenting what in popularizations is always termed "the romance of" (for all it may be quite solid fact) astronomy, geology, the weather, the liquid molecule, cellular development et al., the avoidance of a technical vocabulary facilitates easy comprehension, while the author practises the limiting of science to its own proper business. All too often attempts at scientific popularization needlessly confuse the reader by the obtrusion of matters with which science has nothing to do; Mr. Henshaw abides in the present by the hope he expresses in the concluding section of his volume that in the "future of science, science will no longer invade religion or philosophy . . . will not assume to fly in the ether."

This healthy sanity of viewpoint, which draws the line between matter and spirit, is as commendable as the easy narrative tone in which the author comments the exhibits he draws from the wonder-bag of the concrete. And in this connection the chapter on What Is Science Becoming?, with its classification of the "acknowledged" and "disputed" sciences—among the latter psychoanalysis, on behaviorist testimony, is dismissed as "junk"—is by no means the least interesting.

The author's study of the Einstein theory in some thirty-five pages, modestly enough entitled A Glance Toward Relativity, is a good example of his ability to give a generally understandable transcript of a very complex and elusive theorem. He has defined it and its actual scientific status, pending the absolutely final proving of the three major tests of its truth, without blurring its outlines with an impedimenta of terminology which would defeat the very purpose he had in mind.

In fact, he writes throughout in a clear direct style, and if his book's subtitle, The Incredible Discoveries of Recent Science, be a trifle sensational—all popularization has its inherent weaknesses—it does convey much interesting information accurately and on logically grounded premises

FREDERICK H. MARTENS.

*Universal Knowledge, Volume I. New York: The Universal Knowledge Foundation, Inc.*

"ONE dream ended, it is time for another to begin." The old maxim was clearly beneficent in so far as the completion of the Catholic Encyclopedia led to the beginnings of Universal Knowledge, in which the whole range of human learning is to be exhibited from a strictly scientific but nevertheless Catholic point of view. Now the first volume of the projected twelve invites consideration and at the same time affords a sample of what is to come. One may say frankly that the slice augurs for a good, solid loaf. In format the new encyclopaedia will resemble the International rather than the Britannica. A vast number of topics are to be dealt with concisely, in a popular manner, factually rather than philosophically. The work as a whole is designed to stand at busy people's elbows ready to supply the information that must be had at a moment's notice. This design is borne out in the clear, readable print, the pertinent illustrations and the sturdy binding.

Clearly the production of such a work once more testifies to the scholarship of the Catholic body. Bearing in mind that Universal Knowledge has no religious purpose, it is surprising

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to find how much information has been compiled here either about religion or about the matters between which and religion there exists a definite relation. But leaving this aspect of the encyclopaedia out of consideration altogether, one discovers in it an alertness to find and evaluate interesting knowledge, a high regard for scientific minutiae and an equally high respect for the average inquiring mind, which would entitle the work to general esteem were its origin and management entirely different from what they are.

This having been said, one may be pardoned a few critical comments expressed in the hope that they may be of some service in the preparation of future volumes. A prospectus of the work informs us that the contributors were chosen "not only because of their knowledge of their subjects, but also because of their skill in imparting it." A great proportion of the writers of signed articles has been recruited from the faculties of Catholic colleges—from among men whose ability and learning are far too frequently left unappreciated, even in their own environment. It is good to see them come forward, almost in mass formation, enabled at last to elicit some attention from the public. Nevertheless, one hopes that the large number of similar contributors still available will be drawn upon for ensuing volumes. Universal Knowledge will profit by getting the help of as many good men as is practically possible. A second critical comment might be directed at the bibliographies. It was the firm conviction of a great Catholic scholar and encyclopaedist, now deceased, that what is needed more than anything else from the point of view of religious life in this country is what might be termed a "bibliographical encyclopaedia"—a work evaluating books written on every important subject, so that a consulting reader may have a reliable guide through whatever course of reading he wishes to pursue. Now the bibliographies, be it said in all charity, are the weak link in the chain of Universal Knowledge. There are not enough of them and they are sometimes not up to date.

These things having been said, one may hasten to compliment the editors upon the first evidence of a work loftily conceived, nobly executed, and destined to be of great service to many. They have no hope of making more money than will be required to cover the expenses of the undertaking; and such fame as they may reap from years of hard work might have been trebled in some more alluring form of activity. The twelve volumes of Universal Knowledge will sell for $75.00 in one binding. To bring out a work of such magnitude at such a price is a colossal achievement even from the rather bleak point of view of book-selling. One hopes it will be appreciated.

T. C.

*Mr. Fortune's Maggot, by Sylvia Townsend Warner. New York: The Viking Press. $2.00.*

IT IS the heyday of sceptical literature and it would be odd indeed if woman kept her skirts, or what remains of them, clear of spatterings from the wheels of the agnostic Juggernaut. Sylvia Townsend Warner is not the first woman writer to assume the sceptical attitude, nor will she be the last, for it is both comforting and profitable to be in the fashion.

Mr. Fortune's Maggot has, in fact, already realized on its up-to-date investment in the shape of enthusiastic press notices and choice by the Literary Guild as one of the books to be sent to the Guild's subscribers. These are, of course, but the preliminaries to royalties. Among novelists nowadays fame and fortune are twin handmaids.

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with a bludgeon, and before him Mr. Somerset Maugham did it with a fine pen dipped in acid; Miss Warner has employed another method. In place of a hymn of hate or of acrid realism she gives us irony and poetic suggestion, innuendo and the half-pitying, half-superior smile. Her style and manner (aside from one single sentence incorporated without the slightest artistic reason) is admirable, and admirably free from the obscenity which afflicts so many anti-religious novelists. The fact that she did introduce this sentence is, however, significant; another proof that once the protection of religion is cast off, lubricity of thought and word can invade the most delicate talent.

In Mr. Fortune's Maggot, Miss Warner tells the story of a Church of England missionary to a South Sea Island who makes a single convert and then loses his own faith, and who, in a last cynical gesture before departing, carves for his convert another idol to take the place of the one which he had lost. It is exquisitely written, with many passages of haunting poetry, the beauty of the manner all but concealing the weakness of the matter. This makes it a far more dangerous book than, for instance, Mr. Lewis's Elmer Gantry. Where Elmer Gantry was a moral weakling, Mr. Fortune is an intellectual weakling, and while we are told to believe that he loses his faith, it needs but half a thought to realize that he never had any.

As for Miss Warner's islanders, they are children from the golden age, a sort of compound of Melville and Rousseau, and the paganism of such people, had any such ever existed, is certainly preferable to the sort of religion brought them by Mr. Fortune. Miss Warner intimates that Mr. Fortune left them because he realized that they were better without the ministrations of the Christian faith, but all she proves is that they certainly were better without the ministrations of Mr. Fortune.

Perhaps, though, Miss Warner meant only to tell another amusing story. She has style, a sense of humor, and a mastery of that rarest of literary virtues—understatement.

GRENVILLE VERNON.

*Dawn, by Irving Bacheller. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.*

THE many writing years of Irving Bacheller have contained diverse adventures. Of late years he has had a change of heart, which has gone so far as to lead him into a shocking diatribe against the younger generation. Now for his new novel he has had recourse to the Gospel according to Saint John.

In it he essays a theme that has failed far better talents than his own. Many have attempted the biblical scene of the first Christian years with sad results. The extraordinary temper of the period and the grandeur of its characters elude recreation. Modern versions are ridiculous. Mr. Bacheller, however, has selected his phase of history with discrimination. If indirect description was good enough for Homer, it is quite good enough for him. Evangelical scenes are sketched in with feeling, but the Crucifixion is indirectly presented by Doris of Colossae's chronicle of the influence of that dark day in a far-off town.

The pattern of this tale of the life of Doris is that of the old Greek romances—a series of episodes strung together. The beautiful Doris wanders in the desert; is taken by a robber band, who regard her as supernatural; finally is given to Apollos the converted Jew; and escapes with him. She is brought before Christ by Teron, to confound the new prophet, and is sent on her way with the command to sin no more. In the end she finds peace as the story-teller of Colossae revealing the new faith. All of which Mr. Bacheller has contrived with an effective simplicity that avoids many technical difficulties.

EDWIN CLARK.

## BRIEFER MENTION

*The Teaching of the Early Church on the Use of Wine and Strong Drink, by Irving Woodworth Raymond. New York: Columbia University Press. $3.00.*

MR. RAYMOND'S study on the teaching of the early Church on the use of wine and strong drink is thorough and well documented. It can be cordially recommended to anyone who is interested in this question. His conclusions can be briefly summarized as follows: The wines mentioned in the Bible, with the exception of tirosh, can be regarded as possessing intoxicating qualities; and tirosh was usually intoxicating when ready for use; hence there is no ground for assuming that the wine of Cana and the Last Supper was not intoxicating; in the Christian view wine was considered as intrinsically good, though the evils of abuse were clearly recognized; among both Jews and Christians there were various comparatively small groups dedicated to total abstinence; but there was never an orthodox movement to eliminate wine altogether as evil in itself, nor to compel everyone by civil law to be total abstainers. The present book is really only one chapter in the history of the Church's attitude on the drink problem. And we may be allowed to hope that either Mr. Raymond or someone else will shortly bring the story down to date.

*History of the Sciences in Greco-Roman Antiquity, by Arnold Reymond; translated by Ruth Gheury de Bray. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.50.*

WE MUST go back to the Greeks for the beginnings of serious thought. In the post-mythological times when philosophy was being born there was no real distinction between that subject and science. The wonder of numbers and their combinations, the fact that they were unchanging in a world where all else was in flux save themselves and geometrical figures, these things started men thinking and formed the first lines of the many philosophical treatises which the world has since seen. The author of this book has done a service to students in giving them a brief account of the progress of science from the earliest times though there may be difference of opinion as to his findings on some points. Many would attach much greater importance than he does to Parmenides and his notions, and certainly Burnet—whom he quotes—would hardly uphold the extreme view which he takes of the ideas of Pythagoras on numbers. But the book is very interesting in both parts, that in which the whole subject is traced historically, and that in which each branch receives separate treatment.

*Silver Cities of Yucatan, by Gregory Mason. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. $3.50.*

THAT pestilence and civil wars are the chief factors in the ruin and decline of the Mayan civilization of Yucatan, and not merely the commercial wars of the Spanish explorers, or the intolerances of early profiteers and missionary societies, is the general summary of Gregory Mason's Silver Cities of Yucatan. His book is a carefully detailed account of new discoveries and examinations of ruins of temples, cities and watch-towers, with a running narrative of the daily adventures of the Mason-Spinden expedition. It is valuable in its contents and needs only the illuminating hand of a born writer to complete a magic picture of a land so rich in romantic materials. The man of action in the book prevails over the man of the pen, and we can only regret the grey matter-of-fact tone of the volume.

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## THE QUIET CORNER

*I counsel thee, shut not thy heart nor thy library.*—C. LAMB.

The Memorial Day holidays left the library in a particularly quiescent state for several days. Among the others, Doctor Angelicus revealed a distinct lassitude after a motor trip that covered some six or eight states of the Union, and it was no surprise for Primus Criticus to discover the portly gentleman fallen into an after-luncheon nap, his famous yellow pad on his knees, while something resembling a baby snore sifted from his lips. There were some lines written on the pad and Primus Criticus, ever on the hunt for biographical matter regarding the Doctor, leaned over him quietly and read the sketch of a poem that had been left "to be continued" after his slumber. It was entitled, with all the Doctor's humility:

*The Old Sinner*

"Tired am I of the world, so I might as well be good;
I don't enjoy the flowers and I don't digest my food;
What do I care for the girls and the games when the drinks have all turned sour?
There's only the pillow left me now and this is my bedside hour.
They told me a thing of beauty was a joy to last fore'er,
But what is a sculpture or sonnet, when all I ask is air?
What shall I do with my evenings when the daylight saving's done?
No shows, no dances nor pictures can give me any fun—
Hark! there's the church bell ringing a call for the evening prayer,
I think I'll steal round and discover if anything's doing there."

❧ ❧ ❧

"This quietness in the Corner does not betoken health," declared Hereticus, with a touch of peevishness. "It betokens a felt-slipper age, a forbidden, Byzantine ideal, against which the Arab tried to protect himself with the trickling of fountains. Children love to make noise and some grown-ups among us still use rattles. Savages in the forest drive off evil spirits with tom-toms and invoke their good divinities with a charivari, that descends to us at times of peasant marriages. At the Meistersinger in the opera-house, I heard a be-spectacled spinster administer a crushing lesson to some Spanish guests who were exchanging some household details behind us during the love-song. I could only sigh, when I noticed that they did not understand the Wagnerian lady's protest as I recalled a passage from Romaine Rolland's Musical Tour, where he takes us back to Italy in the eighteenth century, with its eight opera-houses in Venice, and four or five in Naples. His account speaks for the humanity of the Italian audience:

" 'The performance begins, as a rule, at eight o'clock, and ends about half-past twelve. The cost of the places in the parterre is a paule (twelve cents American) unless admission is free; as is often the case in Venice and Naples. The public is noisy and inattentive; it would seem that the peculiar pleasure of the theatre, dramatic emotion, counts for very little. The audience chats at its ease during part of the performance. Visits are paid from box to box. At Milan, "each box opens out of a complete apartment, having a room with a fireplace and all possible conveniences, whether for the preparation of refreshments or for a game of cards. On the fourth floor a faro-table is kept open on either side of the building as long as the opera continues." "At Bologna, the ladies make themselves thoroughly at home; they talk, or rather scream, during the performance, from one box to that facing it, standing up, clapping and shouting bravo! As for the men, they are more

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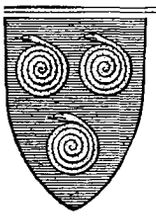
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moderate; when an act has finished, and it has pleased them, they content themselves with shouting until it is performed again. . . ." The parterre capers about and the scene closes with a general "Ah!" as though they were admiring a mid-summer night bonfire.' "

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"I sometimes wonder what has become of the old professor of Salamanca, Doctor Don Francisco Gomez, who came to America, as the New York Sun for June 30, 1926, announced, "to teach and preach and practise American slang," said Doctor Angelicus, indulging in a pinch of his newly imported Copenhagen snuff, which has earned the scorn of Britannicus, hopelessly given over to his Prince's Mixture. "He recalls to me the young English curate who in the midst of the hunting season addressed me in London as a citizen of the land of the horse and asked me of the recent records of a string of racers whose names sounded to me like a page out of Lempriere. Slang is not an America proprietary: it is ubiquitous and the Professor's own references to 'that fine guy,' the recent ambassador to Spain, Mr. Alexander Moore, and to 'the boy-king Alfonso of Spain,' suggesting our recently catalogued boy-friends, would indicate an obliviousness to our finer vocabularies, rather than a scientific approach to our national slang. While we are jazzing, mussing and scorching for the last few years, would not a study of the old prize-ring have been of some advantage to the reverend scientist? He would learn of their belchers or colors worn around the neck, under their dials, mugs or faces: their mouths were muzzles or kissing-traps, their noses, smellers, which, when bleeding, were 'drawing the cork,' when the 'snout was damaged.' The head was a nob or knowledge-box or conk. No, there is nothing new under the sun and slang is as old as the human race. Father Bear gives a big grunt and Little Bear gives two baby grunts to the delight of Mother Bear at her juvenile precocity. Thus slang began shortly after the nursing period of mankind."

"You touch on evolution, Doctor," suggested Primus Criticus.

"Nihil tetigit quod non ornavit," remarked Hereticus, in his hard classical manner.

—THE LIBRARIAN.

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